COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

INTERNAL AFFAIRS BUREAU
INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY
IV2318310

SUBJECT: Deputy Travis Steen # ,
Deputy
Sergeant
Deputy
Santa Clarita Valley Station, North Patrol Division

LOCATION: 26328 Bouquet Canyon Road, Santa Clarita, CA 91350

DATE / TIME OF INCIDENT: January 30, 2014

DATE OF DEPARTMENT KNOWLEDGE: January 31, 2014

ALLEGATION

It is alleged that Deputy Travis Steen was involved in an off duty bar fight at in Valencia. Deputy and Sergeant were two of the responding personnel who had contact with Deputy Steen at the bar. It is alleged Subjects and did not handle the call properly and they may have had knowledge of Deputy Steen's involvement in the fight. There were no arrest made or crime report taken for this incident. Deputy received a call from the victim the following day. It is alleged Subject did not handle this call properly. In the course of the Internal Criminal Investigation Bureau (ICIB) investigation, they uncovered additional criminal and procedural issues regarding Subject Travis Steen. The additional criminal and procedural issues were; prohibited association with parolee's and convicted felons; possible gang affiliation with the motorcycle gang Carnales; and Subject Steen had domestic violence incidents with his and his .

At the conclusion of their investigation, ICIB Investigators submitted this case to the

Justice System Integrity Division of the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office and Santa Clarita office for filing consideration. The case was declined for prosecution. On May 20, 2014, ICIB closed the criminal investigation and forwarded the case to Internal Affairs Bureau for administrative disposition. Refer to ICIB Book, **[Exhibit A]**.

POLICY SECTION



SUMMARY

On January 30, 2014, it is alleged that Subject Steen was involved in a fight at Mabel's Bar. Based off a call from the victim [redacted] the Watch Commander conducted an inquiry and the Unit Commander named Deputy Steen, Sergeant [redacted], Deputy [redacted] and Deputy [redacted] as subjects in this case. The inquiry and ICIB investigation revealed several possible violations of the Departments Policy and Procedure, including:

- That Subject Steen was named as a suspect in the Mabel's bar assault, he observed his friends assault the victim and harbored the suspects by withholding information to responding deputies, and he failed to make any notifications regarding his involvement in this incident.
- That Subject [redacted] handled the call improperly, she failed to identify the suspects and she did not take a report documenting this incident. There was concern she had knowledge Deputy Steen was involved in an off duty incident and she did not handle the call properly to protect Subject Steen.
- That Subject [redacted] did not supervise this incident properly, by allowing Subject [redacted] to handle the call improperly. There was concern he had knowledge Deputy Steen was involved in an off duty incident and he failed to take the appropriate action required of a supervisor.
- That Subject [redacted] received a phone call from the victim of the bar fight at Mabel's bar, she was rude to the victim, she had enough information to notify a supervisor regarding potential deputy misconduct, and she failed to make timely notifications to a supervisor regarding a deputy who was named in an off duty incident. There was concern she had knowledge Deputy Steen was involved in an off duty incident and she failed to notify her supervisors in a timely fashion.
- That Subject Steen had prohibited association with the other named suspects in the Mabel's bar assault, [redacted] and [redacted] These associate's had felony arrests, served time in state prison, and one associate was on parole.
- That Subject Steen had an affiliation with the motorcycle gang Carnales.

- That Subject Steen had domestic violence indents with his and his
- That Subject Steen had behavior off duty that did not reflect the Core Values of the Sheriff's Department.

Internal Affairs Bureau investigators interviewed Subject's Steen, and , on April 9, 2015, Subject was interviewed on April 13, 2015.

Mabel's Bar

On January 30, 2014, Subject Steen and his friends rode their motorcycles to in Santa Clarita. His friends included and While at Schooners, Subject Steen's and her arrived to meet some friends at the bar. walked over to and began arguing with saying, "This is my friends old lady (**Exhibit B**, ***Rice, page 11***)," referring to They began to argue and the bouncer separated from and

walked back over to the group with Subject Steen. said Subject Steen's group gave dirty looks. When got up to go into the bathroom, four males, Subject Steen, and another male followed into the bathroom. said threatened to "bounce his head against the mirror (**Exhibit B**, ***Rice, page 11***)." The bouncer was there to break up the group and no harm came to Subject Steen then spoke to in the back room for approximately 20 minutes. After this conversation, Subject Steen and his friends left Schooners and rode over to Mabel's bar.

> **IAB Note:** Schooners bar and Mabel's bar are located in the same shopping strip mall, within .3 miles of each other.

While at Mabel's, Subject Steen and his friends went inside the bar. and Subject Steen were on a date. While inside Mabel's bar, ran into some high school friends (Victim), and introduce Subject Steen to her high school friends. They separated and went into the bar. was highly intoxicated and he was spitting while he was talking. While and were ordering drinks, spit into one their drinks. Words were exchanged and recognizing level of intoxication, apologized for actions and they walked away.

Later in the evening, Subject Steen was outside of the bar talking with and was also outside and he was still very

intoxicated. [redacted] approached Subject Steen and made a comment about Subject Steen's moustache. [redacted] told ICIB investigators, "Dude, that's you have a nice moustache. I'm like you clean up well. And he's like 'what the fuck did you say to me? And I was like, 'I just want to tell you your mustache is nice. I'm not …no problems.' And that was when he swung on me and decked me in the face (**Exhibit B**, [redacted]***, page 3***)." [redacted] said she heard Subject Steen say to [redacted], "I just want to hit somebody, and then laughing, and then [redacted] came up and was loud, and there Travis went (**Exhibit B**, [redacted] ***page 15***)." [redacted] said she observed Subject Steen throw three punches, while he pretended to play fight with [redacted] (**Exhibit B**, [redacted]***, pages 3-6***). [redacted] said Subject Steen never made contact with [redacted], and she was upset with him because she did not want any fights to start at her business.

> **IAB Note**: Subject Steen denied telling [redacted] he wanted to hit somebody (***Steen, page 48***).

[redacted] said he was outside with Subject Steen when [redacted] told Subject Steen [redacted] was annoying her. [redacted] described [redacted] as being loud, drunk and obnoxious. Subject Steen warned [redacted] to stay away from [redacted]. [redacted] walked away from them and went over to his car which was located in the parking lot. After a few minutes, [redacted] ran in the direction of Subject Steen. [redacted] said [redacted] ran straight up to Subject Steen and Subject Steen hit [redacted] (**Exhibit B**, [redacted]***, page 16***). He observed Subject Steen throw two punches at [redacted] and stated one of the punches struck [redacted]. [redacted] said Subject Steen struck [redacted] because of the comments he made about Subject Steen's moustache (**Exhibit B**, [redacted]***, page 23***).

> **IAB Note:** [redacted] changed his story while speaking to ICIB investigators. He originally stated Subject Steen did not hit [redacted]. Later in the interview, [redacted] said he received a phone call from Subject Steen asking him to tell the Sheriff's Department that he was not involved in the fight.

> **IAB Note**: Subject Steen denied that he hit [redacted]. He additionally denied having a conversation with [redacted] about his moustache.

[redacted] said after Subject Steen struck [redacted] they shook hands and everything was fine. [redacted] and [redacted] approached [redacted] [redacted] was assaulted by [redacted] and [redacted] During the fight, [redacted] was knocked unconscious. The Santa Clarita Sheriff's Department was called along with the Fire Department. [redacted] and [redacted] immediately left the location.

Subject [redacted] was working 64A, was the handing unit and the first to respond to

the fight call. Upon arrival Subject [redacted] said she was flagged down by the waitress who was with the victim. Subject [redacted] put out an initial broadcast on [redacted] regarding the outstanding suspects. She stated [redacted] was very intoxicated and he was uncooperative during her investigation. She could not recall any of the specific details or statements the victim and witnesses made in this investigation. Subject [redacted] said she did not take any notes regarding this incident.

> **IAB Note:** [redacted] said he pointed out one of the suspects who was still at the location and the deputies told him they were not going to go inside to grab him (**Exhibit B**, [redacted]***, page 45***).

Subject [redacted] determined the fight was a [redacted] battery because [redacted] told her he was only hit, was non desirous of prosecution and the two suspects left the location prior to her arrival. Subject [redacted] said she observed Subject Steen outside of the bar and spoke to him regarding the fight. Subject [redacted] said she could not recall what Subject Steen told her about the fight. Subject [redacted] said she sent deputies to canvas the area for witnesses. She could not recall what deputies she sent to look for witnesses. Subject [redacted] said she could not recall what the victim's roommate told her.

> **IAB Note:** [redacted] said, "I don't know why none of them stopped [redacted] because I know for a fact [redacted] told them who it was (**Exhibit B**, [redacted] ***page 14***)."

Subject [redacted] responded to the call and observed numerous bar patrons intermingled with his deputies. He ordered the bouncer to have everyone from the bar go back inside. He observed his deputies interviewing the witnesses. Two females approached Subject [redacted] and told him the bouncer did not stop the fight. Subject [redacted] advised the two females to tell Subject [redacted] this information. Subject [redacted] said he asked Subject [redacted] to give him an update regarding the call. Subject [redacted] told him the crime was a [redacted] battery, and the victim was non desirous. Subject [redacted] felt Subject [redacted] did a thorough investigation.

Subject [redacted] said while he was walking away from speaking to Subject [redacted], he heard an unknown deputy saying Subject Steen was at the location. Subject [redacted] said he observed Subject Steen standing by the bar, with his back turned to him hugging a female. He described Subject Steen's appearance as a "Thug (**Exhibit B**, [redacted]***, page 11***)." Subject [redacted] said he advised Deputy Huntley to have Subject Steen leave the location because Mabel's is a problem bar.

> **IAB Note:** Subject [redacted] and Subject [redacted] stated they had no knowledge Subject Steen was involved in the fight at Mabel's bar.

Subject Steen patted the back of a male deputy, asked if they were good, and left

Mabel's bar. Subject Steen [redacted], [redacted], and [redacted] all left Mabel's bar together on two motorcycles.

The following day January 31, 2014, Subject [redacted] was working Santa Clarita Station as the Watch Deputy. At 0840 hours, she received a call for service from [redacted] [redacted]. Mr [redacted] advised Subject [redacted] he was assaulted at Mabel's bar by an off duty police officer named "Travis" and he wanted a report taken. Subject [redacted] questioned [redacted] and stated she was going to send a unit and a sergeant out to his location. [redacted] advised Subject [redacted] he was still at work and he was going to call once he arrived back at his house.

Subject [redacted] said [redacted] never called back during her shift and she did not have his telephone number. At the end of her shift, Subject [redacted] advised the PM shift Watch Commander Lieutenant John Rush #[redacted], about the call.

> **IAB Note**: Subject [redacted] said she did not notify Subject Steen regarding this incident and stated she had no knowledge of Subject Steen's involvement in the fight at Mabel's bar.

Three of the employee's from Mabel's bar, [redacted] and [redacted], all said Subject Steen called them sometime after the bar fight and asked each of these employees to either provide details regarding the incident or to lie to investigator's regarding Subject Steen's involvement.

[redacted] said on February 1, 2014, at 6:36 hours, he received a phone call from Subject Steen. [redacted] said he was not sure how Subject Steen obtained his phone number. Subject Steen said, "They're investigating him, that they pulled his gun and badge and that they're gonna…that you guys are gonna come talk to me (**Exhibit B**, [redacted]***, page 8***)." [redacted] said this conversation was 29 minutes and 26 seconds long. Subject Steen said, "Tell them that I wasn't involved, that I didn't do anything and that it wasn't me (***Steen, page 22***)." [redacted] said he did not tell the patrol deputies about Subject Steen's involvement with the fight. He said, "At that time, I guess I was just trying to keep Travis [Steen] out of trouble (**Exhibit B**, [redacted] ***page 25***)."

> **IAB Note:** Subject Steen denied the allegation he called [redacted] and told him to lie to investigators. Subject Steen confirmed they had a phone conversation and he may have told [redacted] someone from our Department may be coming out to contact him (***Steen, page 52***).

[redacted] said on February 1, 2014, at 10:44 hours, Subject Steen texted her and asked her if she was working. She texted back and told him she was at her home. Subject Steen called her shortly after that text. Subject Steen told [redacted] he was under investigation, and he asked her if she knew the victim. Subject Steen additionally told her someone was going to be asking her some questions about the

fight. [redacted] told investigators Subject Steen said, "Oh, he asked me to tell you that I didn't see anything and I told him that I don't lie (**Exhibit B,** [redacted] ***page 12***)." She felt Subject Steen told her not to say anything because he did not want to get into trouble.

> **IAB Note:** Subject Steen denied the allegation he called [redacted] and advised her someone from the Department would be contacting her (***Steen, page 51***).

[redacted] said Subject Steen called him after the fight at Mabel's bar. He said Subject Steen stated he was concerned about the incident at the bar. Subject Steen asked him if he knew any of the details, and he wanted [redacted] to update him regarding any details he was able to find out. Subject Steen said investigators were involved and it would create a problem for him at work. [redacted] said to his best recollection, Subject Steen did not coach him in anyway regarding what to say to investigators.

Prohibited Association

Subject Steen said after he and [redacted] broke up, he started to spend time with his new friends [redacted] and [redacted] He described [redacted] as a life-long friend. Sometime in December 2013, Subject Steen and [redacted], [redacted] and [redacted], would get together once or twice a week on Wednesdays or Sundays and ride motorcycles. He met [redacted] through the owner of Santa Clarita Choppers. Subject Steen described [redacted] as an older, wealthy, middle age man who looked normal. Subject Steen said he "hung out" with these friends maybe four or five times.

> **IAB Note:** [redacted] was identified by ICIB as one of the four person named in the assault of [redacted] He refused to speak to the ICIB investigators regarding this case. For [redacted]

Subject Steen described how he met [redacted] Subject Steen was organizing a fund raising event a "1033 ride" for Santa Clarita Station. He was introduced to [redacted] who represented "Good Times Car Club." [redacted] on behalf of the club gave the station $500 dollars, several t-shirts and raffle prizes. Subject Steen said he, [redacted] and the owner of Santa Clarita Choppers would all ride together. Subject Steen had [redacted] phone number and he would ride with the group on Wednesdays and Sundays. Subject Steen said he was unaware of [redacted] criminal history.

> **IAB Note:** [redacted] was identified by ICIB as one of the four persons named in the assault [redacted]

Subject Steen described how he knew [redacted] Subject Steen said he grew up with a group of friends [redacted], [redacted], and [redacted] Subject Steen said he has known [redacted] since he was 10. [redacted] went to prison for eight years. When his friends heard [redacted] was getting out of prison, they decided to mentor [redacted] Subject Steen said sometime in the summer of 2013, [redacted] got released from prison. Subject Steen said they met and he helped mentor [redacted] Subject Steen said [redacted] told him he stayed in prison one extra year so he would not be on parole. Subject Steen said, "I don't work parole. It kind of sounded believable to me back then, you know? I don't know. I just stop people and say you on parole or probation and run 'em, you know, I don't know all the schematics of it (***Steen, page 26***)."

Subject Steen stated he invited [redacted] to the lake with him and [redacted] Subject Steen said when he and [redacted] broke up, [redacted] was there for him every day at 5:00 o'clock at Subject Steen's house. Subject Steen said, "He'd sit there and listen to me whine about [redacted] and my life and he did that for about a week or so. And, he might be a criminal or what, I praise him for that, because he was there when I was in a time of need (***Steen, page 26***)."

Subject Steen said, "You know, so do I hang out with him anymore? No, I don't and I'm mad because I found out he was on parole and, that's not me. This is not me hanging out with thugs. I didn't do a background check on him. I just...I was riding Harleys and that's it. I wasn't out trying to get in bar fights to start trouble. Sorry (***Steen, page 27***)." Subject Steen said he found out [redacted] was still on parole from a girl named [redacted]

> **IAB Note**: [redacted] was identified by ICIB as one of the four persons named in the assault of [redacted]

Gang Affiliation Carnales

Subject Steen said he knew about the Carnales and described them as the only motorcycle gang in Santa Clarita who carried guns and drugs. Subject Steen said he had been chasing them for at least one year and he had knowledge of where their clubhouse was located.

> **IAB Note**: Carnales Califa MC, Described on their website as: Brotherhood and Biking for over 40 years. We are Carnales MC! The Outlaw Motorcycle Club known thorough out the United States. The Sheriff's Department has identified

the Carnales as a motorcycle Gang who adhere to the 1%r life style. See attached Carnales motorcycle gang information [**Exhibit C**].

Subject Steen was asked if he had ever ridden in any sanctioned Carnales motorcycle rides. Subject Steen denied ever riding in a sanctioned Carnales ride. Subject Steen was asked if he had ever done anything off duty with any Carnales gang member. Subject Steen told investigators several incidents where he had interactions with Carnales.

Subject Steen said while he was assigned to custody division, his friend [REDACTED] introduced him to a mechanic named J[REDACTED] Subject Steen said he later found out that [REDACTED] was a Carnales gang member. [REDACTED] drove to Subject Steen's house, picked up his motorcycle, fixed his bike and returned his bike a few weeks later.

IAB Note: Subject Steen described [REDACTED] as one of his two best friends in life. (***Steen, page 25***).

Subject Steen said, "My buddy [REDACTED] starts telling me about the Carnales. And I said what's a Carnales? I just figured it was just a bunch of Hispanics riding bikes…So anyways, he was telling me that, that you know, he has this motorcycle club called the Carnales and back then [REDACTED] had a bike and told me that he went to this barbecue in Fillmore or somewhere out there in Santa Paula and that a bunch of Vagos showed up and he freaked out and took off (***Steen, page 31***)." Subject Steen said he told [REDACTED] to stay away from the Carnales.

Subject Steen said when he was in patrol, he learned the Carnales were a "legit…real motorcycle gang. One percenter (***Steen, page 32***)." Subject Steen said he was at [REDACTED] and he met a guy named [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] is a Carnales gang member. He said [REDACTED] knew Subject Steen and they talked. Subject Steen could not recall what they spoke about (Steen, page 32). Subject Steen said after [REDACTED] left the bar, he went out to his bike and his seat was missing.

Subject Steen said he called [REDACTED] his mechanic, because he knew [REDACTED] was involved in the Carnales. He told [REDACTED] to cal[REDACTED] and to tell him to give Subject Steen his seat back. [REDACTED] called Subject Steen and told him he could come over to his house to pick up his bike seat. Subject Steen said he drove over to [REDACTED] house in [REDACTED] and spent only a few minutes there. Subject Steen said [REDACTED] apologized for taking his seat and gave Subject Steen an additional motorcycle seat for free. Subject Steen said he left [REDACTED] house and drove home.

Subject Steen said a few days later he got a County e-mail from a Department member who works motorcycle gangs, asking him why he was at [REDACTED] house. Subject Steen called him back and told him the story regarding his motorcycle seat. The Department member warned Subject Steen to stay away from the Carnales. Subject Steen said he went to his friend [REDACTED] and told him to stop associating with the Carnales.

Subject Steen said, "I told my buddy [REDACTED] and I said hey, you still talk to him? Stop talking to him. You know, he might've been cool back then but they're starting to rank up a little bit, you know? And, and I said, because if the Department's watching him, there's some shady…there's something shady going on (***Steen, page 33***)."

[REDACTED] told ICIB investigators he was surprised by the associates Subject Steen keeps. Mr [REDACTED] said Subject Steen was hanging out and riding with the Carnales. They would ride to the valley, Fillmore, Santa Paula and hang out. Subject Steen found out the "Feds" were watching the Carnales and Subject Steen separated himself from the gang. Mr [REDACTED] said he heard this from Subject Steen (**Exhibit B**, [REDACTED] ***page 10).***

> **IAB Note:** Subject Steen denied he rode with the Carnales. Subject Steen confirmed he told [REDACTED] about the "Feds" watching the Carnales. Subject Steen said he learned this information from a friend who worked at Palmdale Station, after he attended a motorcycle gang conference (***Steen, page 55***).

Subject Steen denied having a fascination with motorcycle gangs. He said his fascination was in a law enforcement investigations with motorcycle gangs. Subject Steen denied any association with Carnales.

<u>Domestic Violence</u>

ICIB investigators spoke to [REDACTED] during their investigation. [REDACTED] said she and Subject Steen were together for over a year and they lived together approximately eight to nine months. [REDACTED] was asked by investigators if Subject Steen did anything criminal in nature to her or her family. [REDACTED] described an incident at her father's house located at [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] said Subject Steen showed up at her dad's house and they got into an argument over a phone Subject Steen had purchased for her. Subject Steen grabbed the phone out of her hand and she began to scream. [REDACTED] said, "I got scared at that point because from his past, of what I've known and what I've heard and what his [REDACTED] has told me, he doesn't have a good past with women (**Exhibit B**, [REDACTED]***, page 6***)." She told Subject Steen to leave and he refused. [REDACTED] ran into the office and called her sister. Her sister called the Sheriff's Department and they responded. Subject Steen left the location prior to police arriving.

[REDACTED] said, "At the time I didn't know what he was going to do. Not saying he's ever hit me. He's never hit me. He's grabbed me; yes. He's thrown me to the ground; yes. But he's never physically like punched me or slapped me (**Exhibit B**, [REDACTED] ***page 7***)."

> **IAB Note:** Subject Steen confirmed the non-criminal domestic violence incident occurred. Subject Steen denied all allegations that he grabbed [redacted] or threw her to the ground (***Steen, pages 61, 62***).

[redacted] said [redacted] never told her Subject Steen ever physically hurt her. [redacted] said Subject Steen told her Subject Steen and [redacted] used to spit in each other's faces, throw "shit" at each other, and Subject Steen pushed [redacted] [redacted], back when they were together (**Exhibit B,** [redacted] ***page 30***).

ICIB investigators spoke to [redacted] during their investigation. When questioned regarding domestic violence incident between [redacted] and Subject Steen, [redacted] refused to give investigator's any details.

[redacted] was interviewed by Internal Affairs Bureau investigators on April 3, 2015. She was asked details about domestic violence incidents when she and Subject Steen were together. She stated the following: She recalled an incident where the Santa Clarita Sheriff's Station responded to her house on [redacted] Subject Steen was intoxicated, yelling and cursing at her. [redacted] said Subject Steen was not physical during this argument. [redacted] said Subject Steen's behavior needed to stop, so she called the Sheriff's Department. [redacted] said she could not control Subject Steen and she needed outside help. She felt if she were to get law enforcement involved, then subject Steen would stop his behavior ([redacted]***, page 16***).

> **IAB Note:** On September 25, 2011, at 2151 hours, a family disturbance call was generated regarding the above incident ([redacted]). Sergeant Ballentine # [redacted] was the on duty field sergeant and he responded to the location. The handling unit was Subject [redacted] she cleared the call as [redacted] verbal only. See **Miscellaneous Documents**.

[redacted] described some incidents when Subject Steen was physical with her. She said Subject Steen would hold her down by her wrist, on the bed, and several times he took the phone away from her because she tried calling the police.

[redacted] recalled when Subject Steen came home from a motorcycle ride. He slept downstairs and she tried to wake him up. She said Subject Steen was intoxicated so she went through his phone and found a text message from a girl named [redacted] [redacted] woke up Subject Steen. She began to argue with him regarding this text. Subject Steen used his chest and backed [redacted] up against the wall. She pushed him away. Subject Steen said, "Go ahead and call the cops. This is my station, they are going to believe me over you." Subject Steen then scratched his chest and said, "I'm going to tell them you did this ([redacted]***, page 17***)."

[redacted] said that is when Subject Steen grabbed her and held her on the bed. Subject Steen pushed his forehead into [redacted] forehead. [redacted] said

she tried to call the police, but Subject Steen took the phone and threw it against the wall causing the phone to break. [REDACTED] son woke up from the noise. They heard sirens and thought someone had called the police because of their fight. Subject Steen stopped hurting [REDACTED] and walked away from her.

IAB Note: Subject Steen denied this allegation.

[REDACTED] recalled a second domestic violence incident when Subject Steen assaulted her. She said they were driving to a strip club in North Hollywood off the 170 freeway. She and Subject Steen were going to meet some friends and she got lost. [REDACTED] decided to go home. Subject Steen got upset and began to yell at her. They were outside of the car in the rain and Subject Steen grabbed [REDACTED] arm and pulled her inside the car.

They drove away and Subject Steen pulled over to the side of the road and took [REDACTED] phone away from her. He told her he was going to call her aunt. [REDACTED] said she told Subject Steen, "You're drunk, and your acting stupid ([REDACTED] ***page 22***)." Subject Steen exited the truck and came over to her side of the car. He hit himself in the face and told [REDACTED] to hit him. Subject Steen then grabbed [REDACTED] right arm and bit the outside of her arm. She reacted by striking Subject Steen in the head. Subject Steen got back into the car and they drove home. [REDACTED] said she showed her neighbor the bite mark from Subject Steen. The neighbor spoke to Subject Steen and [REDACTED] stayed at the neighbor's house that evening ([REDACTED] ***pages 22, 23***).

[REDACTED] said these domestic violence incident occurred sometime between 2009 and 2011. She never reported the domestic violence incidents because she was embarrassed and she was concerned about Subject Steen losing his job.

IAB Note: Subject Steen recalled this incident and denied the allegation he bit her arm.

<u>**Additional Information**</u>

In the ICIB investigation [REDACTED] provided a photo of Subject Steen page 182 in the ICIB book [**Exhibit A**]. Witness [REDACTED] identified several tattoos on Subject Steen. She spoke about the tattoo "Established in 1980" on Subject Steen chest. She stated Subject Steen got this tattoo because of the movie Alpha Dog. Subject Steen additionally got the tattoo "Live by the gun, die by the gun" on his arm. Subject Steen additionally got a tattoo of a "Spider Web" on his elbow.

IAB Note: Found on answer.com: *Spider web tattoo on elbow has several meanings: A spider web tattoo on the elbow symbolizes feelings or literally being trapped. It is popular in the prison system for obvious reasons, and it is also used amongst punks and skinheads and gangbangers or any other culture conglomerates to represent being*

trapped in society that doesn't understand them.

[redacted] said Subject Steen on the night of the fight at Mabel's bar, was acting nervous. She asked him what was wrong. Subject Steen told [redacted] he was at Schooners and there was an incident in the bathroom "with a guy that his girlfriend cheated on him with (**Exhibit B,** [redacted]**, *page 12***)."

[redacted] said Subject Steen came into the bar with someone who was wearing "Colors" on his jacket. She said the bar has a policy and does not allow anyone inside the bar to wear their gang colors. Subject Steen asked [redacted] permission for his friend to come into the bar. [redacted] allowed them to come into the bar.

> **IAB Note:** [redacted] said when she referred to gang colors, she was speaking about a biker jacket.

Subject Steen then placed his own jacket on the back of his seat. She said some "kid" came up and either touched or took Subject Steen's jacket. Subject Steen was not happy and went after the "kid." She said Subject Steen pushed the "kid", then Subject Steen got into the "kid's" face, and they had to pull Subject Steen off of the "kid."

Subject Steen said he was present when ICIB served a search warrant at his house. He was asked about a citation that was found that was issued to [redacted] Subject Steen said [redacted] gave him a "speeding ticket" and asked him if I could talk to the deputy, and help him out because [redacted] helped sponsor the benefit ride. Subject Steen said he did not remember if he ever spoke to the deputy about the ticket. He said, "I was just going to hang onto it and say I couldn't do anything about it (***Steen, page 59***)."

Subject Steen said the three identification cards that were found in his home were from arrests or detentions that he made in patrol. Subject Steen said he placed these identification cards in his uniform and removed them when he washed his Class B uniforms. Subject Steen said he threw the Identification cards on his washer and forgot to mail the identification cards back to their owners (***Steen, page 59***).

Subject Steen was in possession of two Los Angeles County jackets. One jacket was a fire turn out jacket and the second jacket was a denim jacket the prisoners wear. Subject Steen said his dad was a Fireman for Halloween, four to five years ago and he never realized he took the jacket. The prisoner jacket Subject Steen found was in the back of his truck. Subject Steen said he used to have the prisoners wash his truck once a week and he thinks the prisoner who washed his truck left his jacket inside the bed of his truck. Subject Steen said he found the prisoner's jacket a month or two prior to the search warrant and threw the jacket in his junk corner (***Steen, page 59***). Subject Steen said regarding the county waist chain in his war bag, he thought he emptied the war bag in his garage.

INTERVIEWS

The following Internal Affairs Bureau interview summaries were all based on statements provided by witnesses and the subject during audio recorded interviews. For complete detailed statements refer to the digital audio recordings or transcripts of the interview included in this investigation. All ICIB interviews [**Exhibit B**] used in this investigation were transcribed and can be found in **Exhibit B**.

IAB Interview of Witness Deputy

On March 31, 2015, Internal Affairs Investigators Sergeants Todd Knight and Kim Mendoza interviewed Deputy at Internal Affairs Bureau. Deputy was interviewed as a Witness. She was represented by Attorney Maureen Okwuosa from the law firm of Green and Shinee. The interview was digitally recorded and transcribed. The audio file and transcripts were submitted with this case. The following is a summary of the interview.

Witness was provided her previous transcripts from an interview with ICIB on March 6, 2014. She stated she reviewed her transcripts and she did not want to make any corrections to the statements she made to ICIB. Witness stated she and Subject Steen were "talking" for several months back in 2012. She described talking as a form of dating. Witness said she never dated Subject Steen and their "talking" relationship lasted approximately two months. Witness said she considers Subject Steen only as one of her work partners. Witness said Subject Steen never confided in her regarding the fight at Mabel's bar and she had no knowledge about his involvement.

IAB Interview of Witnesses Deputy

On April 3, 2015, Internal Affairs Investigators Sergeant Todd Knight and Patrick Mannion interviewed Deputy at Palmdale Sheriff's Station. Deputy was interviewed as a Witness. The interview was digitally recorded and transcribed. The audio file and transcripts were submitted with this case. The following is a summary of the interview.

was provided her previous transcripts from an interview with ICIB on March 10, 2014. She stated she reviewed her transcripts and she did not want to make any corrections to the statements she made to ICIB.

said she was aware Travis was at Mabel's bar when a fight occurred. She said Travis woke her up at 1:30 in the morning to tell her about the fight. said she and Travis spoke about the fight several times throughout the week. said as the week went on, Travis changed his story regarding his involvement in the fight. said, "His story changed a lot. One minute he said he wasn't involved, and he didn't see

the fight, or that he saw it from far away (***Witness ██████, page 4***)." ██████ said Travis changed his story three times. When she found out Travis was relieved of duty, she told him, "There has to be more that you're not telling me to—for them to have to relieve you of duty (***Witness ██████ page 4***)." ██████ said at no point did Travis ever tell her he was involved in the fight at Mabel's bar.

██████ was asked about the three other persons involved in the bar fight at ██████ She said she has never met ██████ or ██████ and she had very little knowledge about them. She was aware of ██████ because ██████ dated a mutual friend of her and ██████ ██████ was in prison when ██████ and Travis began to date. ██████ found out from her daughter that Travis and ██████ allowed ██████ to go with them to the river. ██████ was asked why she did not want ██████ ██████ around her ██████ She said, "Because he's been in prison. He's the dirt bags that we deal with on the street everyday (***Witness ██████, page 7***)."

> **IAB Note:** Subject Steen confirmed he invited ██████ to the river.

██████ said Travis used to ride motorcycles with his friend ██████. ██████ introduced him to these guys he knew from a motorcycle club called Carnales. ██████ said she asked Travis, "Are they like a wannabe Vagos or something like that? And he said 'Yeah (***Witness ██████, page 8***)." ██████ described a time when a Carnales motorcycle gang member, who appeared to be Indian with a long ponytail, was in their garage on ██████ The man left their garage and Travis told ██████ the Carnales gang member was fixing his bike for free. She said, "People like that don't want stuff for free. I said, you know, there's always going to be something in return (***Witness ██████, page 8***)."

██████ said there was another time Travis went to a bar and a Carnales gang member stole Travis' motorcycle seat. She said Travis had to have his motorcycle towed by Woods Tow. Travis told ██████ the Carnales gang member stole his seat as a joke. Travis told ██████ he was trying to get a hold of him and he was not returning his calls. ██████ said she never observed Travis wearing any clothing with the Carnales insignia.

██████ said Travis had a fascination with motorcycle gangs. Travis would watch television shows like Ganglands or watch documentaries like the Takedown of the Mongols or Vagos. ██████ said Travis grew his moustache out to look like a "Cholo." He would tie a bandana around the handlebars of his motorcycle. ██████ said she used to tell Travis he was a wannabe and Travis responded that he was like a chameleon. ██████ said she commented to Travis and said, "You want to be, like a motorcycle gang" and Travis responded "I just like to blend into different things (***Witness ██████, page 11***)."

██████ was shown a photo of Travis on page 182, in the ICIB book. She commented about his tattoos. She said Travis got a "spider web" tattoo when he was with ██████ ██████. She thought the tattoo was on his left elbow, because she recalled seeing him drive his truck with his arm hanging out the rolled down window. She described his

spider web tattoo as a prison tattoo. She felt Travis was trying to display an image of being "ghetto" and she said, "I think he tried to look harder than what he was (***Witness* [redacted], *page 12***)." She said Travis got the tattoo "Live by the gun, die by the gun" when they were [redacted] She told him that getting that tattoo as a law enforcement officer could create numerous problems if he were to get into a shooting.

[redacted] said Travis got a tattoo on his stomach that said "Established in 1980" when they were [redacted] She said they were watching the movie Alpha Dog and the main character played by Justin Timberlake, had this tattoo. She said Travis was obsessed with this tattoo and had to get it. [redacted] said she has seen this type of tattoo "Established in 1980" on gangsters and his tattoos look like they are gang related (***Witness* [redacted], *page 14***).

> **IAB Note:** Wikipedia described the movie Alpha Dog as a young marijuana drug dealer and his friends, kidnap and kill one of their associates. Justin Timberlake played the role of Frankie Ballenbacher.

She described a time they were at the river and someone was arguing with Travis and that person referred to Travis as a "gangster". [redacted] said, "So I think he liked the whole intimidation affect. He liked people to be intimidated and scared of him (***Witness* [redacted] *page 14***)."

[redacted] spoke about several domestic violence incident that occurred between her and Travis when they were living together. She recalled an incident where the Santa Clarita Sheriff's Station responded to her house on [redacted] Subject Steen was intoxicated, yelling and cursing at her. [redacted] said Subject Steen was not physical during this argument. [redacted] said Subject Steen's behavior needed to stop, so she called the Sheriff's Department. [redacted] said she could not control Subject Steen and she needed outside help. She felt if she were to get law enforcement involved, then subject Steen would stop his behavior ([redacted] ***page 16***).

[redacted] described some incidents when Subject Steen was physical with her. She said Subject Steen would hold her down by her wrist, on the bed, and several times he took the phone away from her because she tried calling the police.

[redacted] recalled when Subject Steen came home from a motorcycle ride. He slept downstairs and she tried to wake him up. She said Subject Steen was intoxicated so she went through his phone and found a text message from a girl named [redacted] [redacted] woke up Subject Steen. She began to argue with him regarding this text. Subject Steen used his chest and backed [redacted] up against the wall. She pushed him away. Subject Steen said, "Go ahead and call the cops. This is my station, they are going to believe me over you." Subject Steen then scratched his chest and said, "I'm going to tell them you did this ([redacted] ***page 17***)." [redacted] said that is when Subject Steen grabbed her and held her on the bed.

Subject Steen pushed his forehead into T forehead. said she tried to call the police, but Subject Steen took the phone and threw it against the wall causing the phone to break. son woke up from the noise. They heard sirens and thought someone had called the police because of their fight. Subject Steen stopped hurting and walked away from her.

recalled a second domestic violence incident when Subject Steen assaulted her. She said they were driving to a strip club in North Hollywood off the 170 freeway. She and Subject Steen were going to meet some friends and she got lost. decided to go home. Subject Steen got upset and began to yell at her. They were outside of the car in the rain and Subject Steen grabbed arm and pulled her inside the car.

They drove away and Subject Steen pulled over to the side of the road and took phone away from her. He told her he was going to call her aunt. said she told Subject Steen, "You're drunk, and your acting stupid (***, page 22***)." Subject Steen exited the truck and came over to her side of the car. He hit himself in the face and told T to hit him. Subject Steen then grabbed right arm and bit the outside of her arm. She reacted by striking Subject Steen in the head. Subject Steen got back into the car and they drove home. said she showed her neighbor the bite mark from Subject Steen. The neighbor spoke to Subject Steen and stayed at the neighbor's house that evening (***pages 22, 23***).

said these domestic violence incident occurred sometime between 2009 and 2011. She never reported the domestic violence incidents because she was embarrassed and she was concerned about Subject Steen losing his job.

IAB interview of Subject Deputy Travis Steen

On April 9, 2015, Internal Affairs Investigators Sergeants Todd Knight and Patrick Mannion interviewed Deputy Travis Steen at Internal Affairs Bureau. Deputy Steen was interviewed as a Subject and afforded Subject Rights. He was represented by Attorney Leslie Wilcox from the law firm of Green and Shinee. The interview was digitally recorded and transcribed. The audio file and transcripts were submitted with this case. The following is a summary of the interview.

Subject Steen said On January 29, 2014, he met some friends at Schooner's bar to eat dinner. While they were at Schooner's, and arrived and they began to cause a scene. Some of the people Subject Steen was with began to get upset and they went over to and and words were exchanged between both parties. went to the bathroom and several people followed him into the bathroom. Subject Steen said, "I figured they were going to hurt the guy. I grabbed the bouncer. I, I, I, said, 'you better get in there.' I walked in there with the bouncer, told those guys to knock it off (***Steen, page 5***)." Subject Steen said he was playing policeman off duty trying to control the situation. He recalled

and ████████ being two of the people that followed ████████ into the bathroom. Subject Steen additionally identified ████████ as being at ████████ with him and the group.

Subject Steen said he and ████████ had a conversation about a debt ████ had with Subject Steen. He could not recall how long this conversation was between him and ████████ Subject Steen said they were at Schooners for a few hours. During that time he drank one beer and Red Bull. Subject Steen said he left Schooners and rode over to Mabel's bar. He went with ████████ ████████ and ████████

Subject Steen said when he arrived at Mabel's, he got a water and used the restroom. Subject Steen said later in the evening he was standing by the doorway. He said, "some young kid like ran up on me and the bouncer goes, 'Watch out' and I turn around real quick and I was like dude what? Like who are you? And then he was like oh, I'm just messing around. And he was wasted, couldn't even stand up and then I remember the girl I was with goes, oh that's whatever his name was. And I was like oh, okay, and then I remember she said to him…I don't know how well she knew him, but she said to him, 'You can't be running up on people like that,' I remember they laughed and then I think I walked a little bit more back in and then all of a sudden I heard there was a fight (***Steen, pages 12, 13***)."

Subject Steen said he was not going to get involved. He recalled the bouncer and ████ ████ ran out the door while he stayed inside. Subject Steen said he never spoke to the victim prior to their encounter while he stood in the doorway. Subject Steen said he heard after the fact, the victim was spitting in the girl's drinks and he was being a nuisance at the bar, while he was in the restroom. Subject Steen was asked if victim made any comments about his moustache. Subject Steen replied no. Subject Steen said he did not know how the fight started. When he walked outside to see what had happened, all of the guys he was with were gone. He recalled seeing ████████ rendering aid to the victim and ████████ was standing by his motorcycle.

> **IAB Note:** ████████ and ████████ both said the victim ████████ made statements to Steen about his moustache.

Subject Steen recalled seeing the deputies at the call but could not recall all of the personnel that were there. He said, "You know, they're my partners so I went over, hey guys, what's going on? You know, and I remember they said…████ little ████ I remember she said something. 'Oh, just a fight,' and I said yeah, typical ████ and I was on my way (***Steen, page 14***)." Subject Steen said Subject ████ told him, "The kid was being an asshole to the fireman or something and, and that was it ***(Steen, page 17)***." Subject Steen said he additionally recalled seeing Subject ████. Subject Steen said he is close with all of the sergeants and he recalled Subject ████ gave him a smirk. (***Steen, page20***). Subject Steen said he and Subject ████ never spoke to each other at ████

Subject Steen said he left [redacted] approximately 10 minutes after the deputies were on scene, with [redacted] and [redacted] They went back to [redacted] house and then he went home. Subject Steen said only he and [redacted] spoke about the fight, but he could not recall the detail of their conversation. Subject Steen said when he returned to work, the watch commander advised him the victim named Subject Steen as the person who assaulted him at the bar fight. Subject Steen said he was placed on desk duty the remainder of the weekend.

Subject Steen denied speaking to [redacted] the night of the incident. He stated he talked to [redacted] after the fight. He recalled telling [redacted] he was relieved of duty. Subject Steen said he never told [redacted] to lie to investigators when they contacted him.

Subject Steen said when his relationship failed with [redacted], he needed friends. The owner of Santa Clarita Choppers was friends with [redacted] and the three of them began riding motorcycles together. Subject Steen described how he met [redacted] Subject Steen was organizing a fund raising event, a "1033 ride" for Santa Clarita Station. He was introduced to [redacted] who represented "Good Times Car Club." [redacted] on behalf of the club gave the station $500 dollars, several t-shirts and raffle prizes. Subject Steen said he, [redacted] and the owner of Santa Clarita Choppers would all ride together. Subject Steen had [redacted] phone number and he would ride with the group on Wednesdays and Sundays.

Subject Steen said he was unaware of [redacted] criminal history. He stated ICIB investigators called him and told Subject Steen, [redacted] was arrested for possession of Marijuana for sale. Subject Steen said, "There's a green light on me from the Carnales somehow in that whole weed grow thing. And I knew nothing about it, because if I knew about him and a weed grow I guarantee I would have busted him myself before you guys got him (***Steen, pages 65, 66***)."

Subject Steen described how he knew [redacted] Subject Steen said he grew up with a group of friends [redacted], and [redacted] Subject Steen said he has known [redacted] since he was 10. [redacted] went to prison for eight years. When the group heard [redacted] was getting out of prison, the group of friends decided they were going to mentor [redacted]. Subject Steen said sometime in the summer of 2013, [redacted] got released from prison. Subject Steen said they met up and he helped mentor [redacted] Subject Steen stated [redacted] told him he stayed in prison one extra year so he would not be on parole. Subject Steen said, "I don't work parole. It kind of sounded believable to me back then, you know? I don't know. I just stop people and say you on parole or probation and run 'em, you know, I don't know all the schematics of it (***Steen, page 26***)."

Subject Steen stated he invited [redacted] to the lake with him and [redacted]. Subject Steen said when he and [redacted] broke up, [redacted] was there for him every day at 5:00 o'clock at Subject Steen's house. Subject Steen said, "He'd sit there

and listen to me whine about [redacted] and my life and he did that for about a week or so. And, he might be a criminal or what, I praise him for that, because he was there when I was in a time of need (***Steen, page 26***)."

Subject Steen said, "You know, so do I hang out with him anymore? No, I don't and I'm mad because I found out he was on parole and, that's not me. This is not me hanging out with thugs. I didn't do a background check on hm. I just...I was riding Harleys and that's it. I wasn't out trying to get in bar fights to start trouble. Sorry (***Steen, page 27***)." Subject Steen said he found out [redacted] was still on parole from a girl named [redacted]

Subject Steen said he found out while he was relieved of duty that [redacted] was still on active parole. Subject Steen said he never made any notifications to the Department regarding his association and friendship with [redacted]

Subject Steen said he met [redacted] through the owner of Santa Clarita Choppers. He described [redacted] as an older, wealthy normal guy with kids. He said he rode with [redacted] a total of four to five times.

Subject Steen spoke about his knowledge of the Carnales motorcycle gang and his association with several Carnales gang members. Subject Steen said he knew about the Carnales and described them as the only motorcycle gang in Santa Clarita who carried guns and drugs. Subject Steen said he had been chasing them for at least one year and he had knowledge of where their clubhouse was located.

Subject Steen was asked if he had ever ridden in any sanctioned Carnales motorcycle rides. Subject Steen denied ever riding in a sanctioned Carnales ride. Subject Steen was asked if he had ever done anything off duty with any Carnales gang member. Subject Steen told investigators several incidents where he had interactions with Carnales.

Subject Steen said while he was assigned to custody division, his friend [redacted] introduced him to mechanic named [redacted] Subject Steen said he later found out that [redacted] was a Carnales gang member. [redacted] drove to Subject Steen's house, picked up his motorcycle, fixed his bike and returned his bike a few weeks later.

Subject Steen said, "My buddy [redacted] starts telling me about the Carnales. And I said what's a Carnales? I just figured it was just a bunch of Hispanics riding bikes...So anyways, he was telling me that, that you know, he has this motorcycle club called the Carnales and back then [redacted] had a bike and told me that he went to this barbecue in Fillmore or somewhere out there in Santa Paula and that a bunch of Vagos showed up and he freaked out and took off (***Steen, page 31***)." Subject Steen said he told [redacted] to stay away from the Carnales.

Subject Steen said when he was in patrol, he learned the Carnales were a "legit...real

motorcycle gang. One percenter (***Steen, page 32***)." Subject Steen said he was at Schooners and he met a guy named is a Carnales gang member. He said knew Subject Steen and they talked. Subject Steen could not recall what they spoke about (Steen, page 32). Subject Steen said after left the bar, he went out to his bike and his seat was missing.

Subject Steen said he called his mechanic, because he knew was involved in the Carnales. He told to call Victor and to tell him to give Subject Steen his seat back. called Subject Steen and told him he could come over to his house to pick up his bike seat. Subject Steen said he drove over to house in and spent only a few minutes there. Subject Steen said apologized for taking his seat and gave Subject Steen an additional motorcycle seat for free. Subject Steen said he left house and drove home.

Subject Steen said a few days later he got a County e-mail from a Department member who works motorcycle gangs, asking him why he was at house. Subject Steen called him back and told him the story regarding his motorcycle seat. The Department member warned Subject Steen to stay away from the Carnales. Subject Steen said he went to his friend and told him to stop associating with the Carnales. Subject Steen said, "I told my buddy and I said hey, you still talk to him? Stop talking to him. You know, he might've been cool back then but they're starting to rank up a little bit, you know? And, and I said, because if the Department's watching him, there's some shady...there's something shady going on (***Steen, page 33***)."

told ICIB investigators he was surprised by the associates Subject Steen keeps. Mr said Subject Steen was hanging out and riding with the Carnales. They would ride to the valley, Fillmore, Santa Paula and hang out. Subject Steen found out the "Feds" were watching the Carnales and Subject Steen separated himself from the gang. Mr said he heard this from Subject Steen (**Exhibit B**, ***, page 10).***

Subject Steen denied having a fascination with motorcycle gangs. He said his fascination was in a law enforcement investigations with motorcycle gangs. Subject Steen denied any association with Carnales.

Subject Steen said he had had the tattoos "Established in 1980, Live by the gun die by the gun, and a spider web" on his body. He said these tattoos are not bigoted, offensive, vulgar, drug-related, anti-American or violent-centric in any form or fashion. Subject Steen when questioned about his "live by the gun die by the gun" tattoo, he referred to this tattoo as art. When questioned if this tattoo had any gang culture or prohibited association, He said, "It's talking about military culture (***Steen, page 41***)." Subject Steen said he was not in the military and said his tattoos have nothing to do with "gangs.

Subject Steen was asked about an off duty incident that occurred in December 2013 or January 2014, at Mabel's bar. He said some "kid" try to steal his flannel jacket that he

left on a chair at Mabel's. Subject Steen said he went into the restroom and when he came out the kid had his jacket. Subject Steen said the "kid' got scared, dropped his jacket and the bouncer told the "kid' to leave. Subject Steen said he never got physical or pushed the "kid" during this incident.

Subject Steen was told [REDACTED] found out Subject Steen was a police officer because of Subject Steen's Facebook page. Subject Steen was asked if there were any photos of him identifying himself as a police officer. Subject Steen said, "I'm sure I do. I know there's a picture of me and my daughter in a radio car" (***Steen, page 46***).

Subject Steen said he was present when ICIB served a search warrant at his house. He was asked about a citation that was found in his house, issued to [REDACTED] Subject Steen said [REDACTED] gave him a "speeding ticket" and asked him if I could talk to the deputy, and help him out because [REDACTED] helped sponsor the benefit ride. Subject Steen said he did not remember if he ever spoke to the deputy about the ticket. He said, "I was just going to hang onto it and say I couldn't do anything about it (***Steen, page 59***)."

Subject Steen said the three identification cards that were found in his home were from arrests or detentions that he made in patrol. Subject Steen said he placed these identification cards in his uniform and removed them when he washed his Class B uniforms. Subject Steen said he threw the Identification cards on his washer and forgot to mail the identification cards back to their owners (***Steen, page 59***).

Subject Steen was in possession of two Los Angeles County jackets. One jacket was a fire turn out jacket and the second jacket was a denim jacket the prisoners wear. Subject Steen said his dad was a Fireman for Halloween, four to five years ago and he never realized he took the jacket. The prisoner jacket Subject Steen found was in the back of his truck. Subject Steen said he used to have the prisoners wash his truck once a week and he thinks the prisoner who washed his truck left his jacket inside the bed of his truck. Subject Steen said he found jacket a month or two prior to the search warrant and threw the jacket in his junk corner (***Steen, page 59***). Subject Steen said regarding the county waist chain in his war bag, he thought he emptied the war bag in his garage.

IAB interview of Subject Deputy [REDACTED]
On April 9, 2014, Internal Affairs Investigators Sergeants Todd Knight and Patrick Mannion interviewed Deputy [REDACTED] at Internal Affairs Bureau. Deputy [REDACTED] was interviewed as a Subject and afforded Subject Rights. She was represented by Attorney Leslie Wilcox from the law firm of Green and Shinee. The interview was digitally recorded and transcribed. The audio file and transcripts were submitted with this case. The following is a summary of the interview.

Subject [REDACTED] said she had worked at Santa Clarita Station for four to five years and has handled previous fight calls in the past. She coordinated the call over [REDACTED], and

had her assisting units meet her at the location. Upon arriving at Mabel's bar, she was flagged down by the victim and the waitress. The victim [redacted] told her he was involved in a fight. She recalled the victim was intoxicated, slurring his words and he was uncooperative. Subject [redacted] escorted the victim over to a radio car so he could be medically treated by the Fire Department. Subject [redacted] said after the victim told her what happened, he did not want to give her any further information.

Subject [redacted] advised over [redacted] two suspects left the location in a truck. Sergeant [redacted] advised her to give this information out on the duplex patch. Subject [redacted] said prior to her initial broadcast, she determined the crime was a battery. Subject [redacted] said the waitress told her it was a mutual fight and two of the suspects left the location prior to her arrival. Subject [redacted] could not recall many details or statements made, who she spoke to, or specifics regarding this incident. Subject [redacted] said she did not take any notes or write down anything anyone was telling her.

Subject [redacted] put out a "Code 4" and stayed with the victim. She said she stayed at [redacted] approximately 30 minutes. Subject [redacted] said she was with the victim the entire time. Subject [redacted] said she never knew the victim was knocked unconscious during the fight. Subject [redacted] said she never looked for the informant who placed the call for service. She never went into the bar to look for additional witnesses, suspects, or victims. Subject [redacted] said she had her assisting Deputies check for witnesses, but she could not recall who she assigned that task. Subject [redacted] said she did not write any reports because the victim was not desirous of a report.

Subject [redacted] said she observed Subject Steen upon her arrival at Mabel's bar. She asked Subject Steen what happened. Subject [redacted] could not recall what Subject Steen told her. She said, "I asked him what, if he knew what happened. He said, no ([redacted] ***page 16***)." Subject [redacted] said she had no knowledge of Subject Steen's involvement in the fight at Mabel's bar during her shift. Subject [redacted] said she never did anything to protect Subject Steen during this investigation.

IAB Interview of Subject Sergeant [redacted]

On April 13, 2015, Internal Affairs Investigators Sergeants Todd Knight and John Adams interviewed Sergeant [redacted] at Internal Affairs Bureau. Sergeant [redacted] was interviewed as a Subject and afforded Subject Rights. He was represented by Teresa O'Neil from Professional Police Officers Associations. The interview was digitally recorded and transcribed. The audio file and transcripts were submitted with this case. The following is a summary of the interview.

Subject [redacted] recalled what occurred on January 30, 2014, at Mabel's bar. He said he responded to the call and observed a tremendous amount of people intermingled in the parking lot of Mabel's bar with his deputies. He could not see all of his personnel, so he told the bouncer to have everyone go back inside the bar. Two women contacted him and stated the bouncer stood by and allowed the victim to get beat up. Subject [redacted]

directed the two females to tell Subject [redacted] this information.

Subject [redacted] said he had worked at Santa Clarita Station as the field sergeant for the past two to three years. He has worked with Subject [redacted] and stated she is a good deputy. Subjec[redacted] rated Subject [redacted] as '[redacted] handling the call. He said she coordinated the call properly, she conducted an investigation, she had deputies interviewing witnesses and she determined the crime was a battery.

Subject [redacted] said he did not give Subject [redacted] any advice on how to handle this call at Mabel's bar. He said he let her conduct her interviews, she told him what crime occurred, and he felt Subject [redacted] investigation was conducted appropriately and in policy so he never gave her any advice. After Subject [redacted] advised Subject [redacted] the victim was non-desirous of prosecution, he heard a deputy identify Subject Steen as one of the bar patrons.

Subject [redacted] said he looked in the direction of the bar and saw Subject Steen hugging a female. He described subject Steen as a "thug" who was wearing headband on his head and the letters SCC on the back of his shirt. Subject [redacted] turned to one of the deputies and said, "Hey, tell him to get out of here if you talk to him (**Exhibit B**, [redacted], ***page 11***)." Subject [redacted] said the reason he made the comment for Subject Steen to leave the bar was [redacted] was a problem bar and he did not want his deputies in this bar.

Subject [redacted] said he was not aware of Subject Steen's involvement in the fight during his shift. He never notified the watch commander regarding seeing Subject Steen at the bar. Subject [redacted] said the following day he notified Lieutenant Randy Harris regarding seeing Subject Steen at Mabel's bar. He said the only reason he notified Lieutenant Harris was he had knowledge Subject Steen [redacted] [redacted] and he felt this was a red flag seeing Subject Steen at a bar.

Subject [redacted] said prior to him having any knowledge of Subject Steen's involvement in the bar fight, he spoke to Subject Steen at Santa Clarita Station. Subject [redacted] said their talk was only regarding Subject Steen being in a problem bar in their area and he advised Lieutenant Harris he would discuss this issue with Subject Steen. Subject [redacted] said there was no conversation regarding any details about the fight. Subject [redacted] said he had no knowledge of Subject Steen's involvement in the fight at Mabel's bar during his shift. Subjec[redacted] said he never did anything to protect Subject Steen during this investigation.

IAB interview of Subject Deputy [redacted]

On April 9, 2015, Internal Affairs Investigators Sergeants Todd Knight and Patrick Mannion interviewed Deputy [redacted] at Internal Affairs Bureau. Deputy [redacted] was interviewed as a Subject and afforded Subject Rights. She was represented by Attorney Leslie Wilcox from the law firm of Green and Shinee. The interview was digitally recorded and transcribed. The audio file and transcripts were submitted with this case. The following is a summary of the interview.

Subject [redacted] said she was working as the dayshift watch deputy when she received a call from the victim. The victim said he was assaulted by an off-duty police officer. Subject [redacted] recalled hearing the victim say the off-duty police officer worked for the Los Angeles Police Department. The victim identified the off-duty police officer by the first name of "Travis" who had a moustache. Subject [redacted] said she obtained the victims information and she was going to dispatch a sergeant to his address. The victim stated he was at work. Subject [redacted] advised the victim to call back the station when he arrived home so she could dispatch a call to his home address. Subject [redacted] said several hours had passed by and the victim never called back. At the end of her shift she passed on the information to the PM Shift Watch Commander Lieutenant Rush.

Subject [redacted] said prior to this call, she had never handled a call where someone alleged misconduct of a police officer. Subject [redacted] said because she felt the call was about another agencies employee, she felt it was more appropriate to send a sergeant to the call to verify the complaint. Subject [redacted] said when the victim mentioned the name Travis, she did not immediately think of Subject Steen because she and Subject Steen were not on a first name basis.

Subject [redacted] said she searched the call at Mabel's bar and she was able to determine Subject Steen may have been at that call. She said she looked through the log clearances and she thinks she recalled seeing the victim's name in the log. She did not notify the day shift watch commander because she thought the victim was going to call back relatively soon. Subject [redacted] said she never contacted Subject Steen during her shift and she did not notify him about the victim's statements. Subject [redacted] said she never did anything to protect Subject Steen during this investigation.



Jim McDonnell, Sheriff

County of Los Angeles
Sheriff's Department Headquarters
4700 Ramona Boulevard
Monterey Park, California 91754-2169



May 13, 2015

Deputy Travis Steen, #[REDACTED]

Dear Deputy Steen:

You are hereby notified that it is the intention of the Sheriff's Department to discharge you from your position of Deputy Sheriff, Item No. 2708A, with this Department, effective the close of business June 4, 2015.

An investigation under IAB File Number IV 2318310, conducted by Internal Affairs Bureau, coupled with your own statements, has established the following:

1. That in violation of Department Manual of Policy and Procedures Section 3-01/030.05, General Behavior; and/or 3-01/050.85, Fraternization and Prohibited Associations, on or about 2013 through January 30, 2014, you admittedly maintained a personal relationship with [REDACTED] and/or [REDACTED] both convicted felons, and/or failed to notify your unit commander of your relationship with them, as evidenced by, but not limited to:

   a. admitting to contacting or being contacted in the summer of 2013 by [REDACTED] who you knew had just been released from prison; and/or,

   b. admitting you accompanied both [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] as they participated in motorcycles rides, and/or attended drinking establishments, and/or spent personal time together; and/or,

   c. admitting you held on to a traffic citation (A127120) in the name of [REDACTED] in his possession after [REDACTED]

asked you if he could talk to the deputy who wrote the citation, and or words to that effect; and/or,

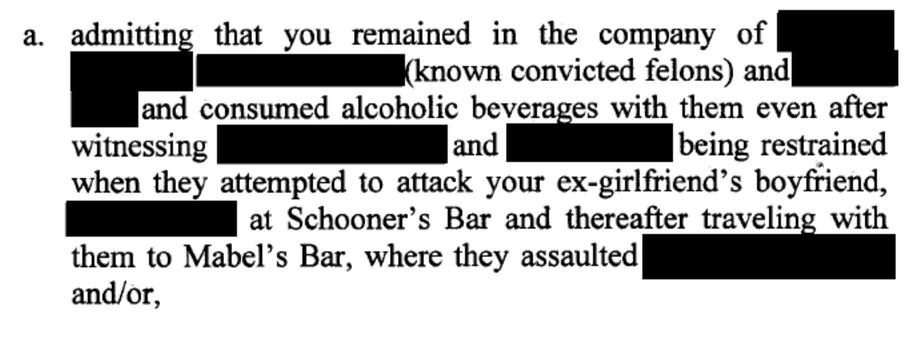
d. failing to seek or receive, authorization from your Unit Commander to maintain a personal relationship with [redacted] and/or [redacted]

Your conduct brought discredit to yourself and/or the Department as patrons and employees of Mabel's and Schooner's bar knew or believed that [redacted] and [redacted] had a criminal history and/or belonged to a motorcycle gang, and that you were employed with the Sheriff's Department.

2. That in violation of Department Manual of Policy and Procedures Section 3-01/030.05, General Behavior; and/or 3-01/050.85, Fraternization and Prohibited Associations, on or between 2011 and 2012, you admitted you relied on the criminal connections of your motorcycle mechanic named [redacted] who you believed was associated with or a member of the [redacted] motorcycle gang, to contact and retrieve your stolen seat that was removed from your motorcycle after meeting and conversing with a [redacted] motorcycle gang member, [redacted] at Schooner's bar. You knew that [redacted] was able to contact [redacted] and direct [redacted] to return the seat. You went to [redacted] home and retrieved your seat at the direction of [redacted] You failed to notify your unit commander of your relationship with [redacted] and/or your contact with [redacted]

3. That in violation of the Department's Manual of Policy and Procedures 3-01/030.05, General Behavior; and/or 3-01/040.90, Reporting Information; and/or 3-01/050.30, Off Duty Incidents; and/or 3-01/030.06, Disorderly Conduct; and/or 3-01/030.10, Obedience to Laws, Regulations, and Orders (pertaining to Battery, 242 C.P.C.); and/or 3-01/000.13, Professional Conduct – Core Values, on or about January 30, 2014, you engaged in a pattern of undesirable and unprofessional behavior when you demonstrated disorderly conduct and battered [redacted] in a public place where you were known to be employed by the Sheriff's Department. You were named as a subject in a criminal complaint (Sheriff Department URN 014-01356-0613-054) and Internal Criminal Investigation Bureau supplementary report (914-00016-2003-441). Although charges were not filed by the District Attorney's Office, you failed to timely disclose your conduct and involvement in the assault against [redacted] to the Department, and/or failed to take appropriate police action by disclosing information to the

investigating deputy personnel or supervisor on scene. You conducted yourself in a manner that caused undue embarrassment and/or damage to the reputation of, and/or eroded the public's confidence in the Sheriff's Department, as evidenced by, but limited to the following:



a. admitting that you remained in the company of (known convicted felons) and and consumed alcoholic beverages with them even after witnessing and being restrained when they attempted to attack your ex-girlfriend's boyfriend, at Schooner's Bar and thereafter traveling with them to Mabel's Bar, where they assaulted and/or,

b. stating you intervened and was "playing police," as and approached and challenged him to a fight; and/or,

c. stating publicly and to that you wanted to batter someone, prior to assaulting and/or words to that effect; and/or,

d. striking in the face with your fist; and/or,

e. retreating into the establishment and not disclosing your involvement or information to assist the investigating deputies uncover those involved; and/or,

f. greeting investigating deputy personnel at the crime scene, but failing to disclose information regarding the incident to them and/or Department supervisors.

4. That in violation of the Department's Manual of Policy and Procedures Section 3-01/040.76, Obstructing an Investigation/Influencing a Witness, on or about January 30, 2014, through February 2, 2014, you actively interfered with an investigation by speaking with witnesses in order to influence their testimony, as evidenced by, but not limited to:

a. advising that you were under investigation and asked her not to say anything to Department investigators

because you did not want to get in trouble, and/or words to that effect; and/or,

b. advising that you could lose your job if the Department understood your involvement in the assault of and/or asking to tell investigators you were not involved in the incident and did not do anything, and/or words to that effect; and/or,

c. asking if she had your best interests in mind after telling her Department investigators might be contacting her regarding the incident, and/or words to that effect.

5. That in violation of the Department's Manual of Policy and Procedures Section 3-01/040.70, False Statements; and/or 3-01/040.75, Failure to Make Statements and/or Making False Statements during Departmental Internal Investigations, on or about January 30, 2014, through February 1, 2014, you failed to make full, complete and/or truthful statements regarding your involvement in the assault of as evidenced by, but not limited to:

   a. stating to Sergeant "Oh it wasn't like that. I just rolled up after the fight and then you guys got there," and/or words to that effect; and/or,

   b. stating, "No," when Deputy asked you if you knew what had happened at the incident, and/or words to that effect; and/or,

   c. stating to Lieutenant that you were not involved in the fight at Mabel's Bar on January 30, 2014.

6. That in violation of the Department's Manual of Policy and Procedures Section 3-01/040.70, False Statements; and/or 3-01/040.75, Failure to Make Statements and/or Making False Statements during Departmental Internal Investigations, on or about April 9, 2015, you failed to make full, complete and/or truthful statements during your administrative interview, as evidenced by, but not limited to:

a. stating, "and then I think, I like, walked in a little bit more back in and then all of a sudden I hear there was a fight," and/or words to that effect; and/or,

b. stating, "I don't know," when asked, how did the fight start, and/or words to that effect; and/or,

c. stating, "Didn't, I, when I walked out, the fire engine was pulling in," and/or words to that effect when you were asked what did you see; and/or,

d. stating, "No way. I'm safe inside," when asked if you went outside to look at anything, and/or words to that effect; and/or,

e. stating, "I'd say no," when told that [redacted] said he saw you throw several punches at Mr. [redacted] and/or words to that effect; and/or,

f. stating, "There was no incident," when asked if you notified the Santa Clarita Watch Commander, and/or words to that effect.

Additional facts for this decision are set forth in the Disposition Worksheet, Investigative Summary and Investigative Packet which are incorporated herein by reference.

You may respond to the intended action orally or in writing. In the event that you choose to respond orally to these charges, you have already been scheduled to meet with Chief Jacques A. La Berge, on June 2, 2015, at 1400 hours, in his office, which is located at 4700 Ramona Blvd., Room 435, Monterey Park, California 91754. If you are unable to appear at the scheduled time and wish to schedule some other time prior to June 2, 2015, for your oral response, please call Chief La Berge secretary at [redacted] for an appointment.

If you choose to respond in writing, please call Chief La Berge's secretary to cancel your scheduled appointment, and send your response to the facts contained in this letter to Chief La Berge's office by no later than June 4, 2015.

Unless you are currently on some other type of authorized leave, pursuant to Rule 16.01 of the Los Angeles County Civil Service Commission Rules, effective immediately, you are on paid administrative leave which will continue during the fifteen (15) business days you have to respond to the intended discharge or until the conclusion of your pre-disciplinary hearing. If you are presently on an authorized leave, that leave will continue during the fifteen (15) business days you have to respond to the intended discharge, or until the conclusion of your pre-disciplinary hearing.

Failure to respond to this Letter of Intent within fifteen (15) business days will be considered a waiver of your right to respond and will result in the imposition of the discipline indicated herein.

If you did not receive the investigative material on which your discipline is based at the time you were served with this correspondence, you may contact the Internal Affairs Bureau at (323) 890-5300, to obtain a copy of the case file.

The Sheriff's Department reserves the right to amend and/or add to this letter.

Sincerely,

JIM McDONNELL, SHERIFF

Donnie L. Mauldin, Captain
Internal Affairs Bureau

Note: Attached for your convenience are excerpts of the applicable areas of the Manual of Policy and Procedures.

DLM:JAL:lp

cc: Advocacy Unit
Employee Relations Unit
Chief Jacques A. La Berge, North Patrol Division
Internal Affairs Bureau
(File #IV2318310)



CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

February 14, 2018

FINAL COMMISSION ACTION

Subject of Hearing: *Petition of* ***TRAVIS STEEN*** *for a hearing on his* ***discharge****, effective August 17, 2015, from the position of Deputy Sheriff, Sheriff's Department,* **Case No. 15-286**.

The Civil Service Commission, at its meeting held on February 7, 2018 approved findings in the above-entitled case. The petitioner's objections were overruled.

Since a copy of these findings has already been provided to all the parties, we have enclosed a copy of the signed formal order of the Commission for your records.

Anyone desiring to seek review of this decision by the Superior Court may do so under Section 1085 or 1094.6 of the Code of Civil Procedure as appropriate. An action under Section 1094.6 can only be commenced within 90 days of the decision.

Steve Cheng
Interim Executive Director

Enclosure

c: Travis Steen
Amy Johnson
Nohemi Gutierrez-Ferguson
Stephen Biermsmith

ROOM 522 KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION • 500 W. TEMPLE STREET, LOS ANGELES, CA 90012 • TELEPHONE (213) 974-2411 • FAX (213) 974-2534

BEFORE THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION OF THE

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

In the matter of the ***discharge****, effective August 17, 2015, from the position of Deputy Sheriff, Sheriff's Department, of* **TRAVIS STEEN** **(Case No. 15-286)**	ORDER OF THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

On February 7, 2018, the Civil Service Commission of the County of Los Angeles over-ruled the Petitioner's objections. The Commission adopted as its final decision, the findings and recommendation of the Hearing Officer, Stephen Biersmith, to sustain the Department.

Dated this 14th day of February, 2018.

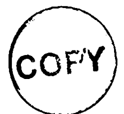
STEVEN AFRIAT, President

DENNIS F. HERNANDEZ, Member

NAOMI NIGHTINGALE, Member

JOHN DONNER, Member

Z. GREG KAHWAJIAN, Member



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Appeal of	)	
TRAVIS STEEN,	)	FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW & RECOMMENDATION
Appellant	)	
vs.	)	Case No. 15-286
SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT	)	
Respondent.	)	

DATES OF HEARING

May 17th, May 19th, August 16th, August 18th of 2016 and January 26, of 2017

APPEARANCES

For the Department:
Ms. Nohemi Gutierrez Ferguson
Guiterrez, Preciado & House
2010 East Colorado Blvd.
Pasadena, CA. 91107

For the Appellant:
Ms. Amy Johnson
Green & Shinee
16055 Ventura Bl. Suite 1000
Encino, CA 91436

ISSUES

1. Are the allegations contained in the Department's letter of September 18, 2015 true?

2. If any of all are true, is the discipline appropriate?

APR 25 2017
RECEIVED
LOS ANGELES COUNTY
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

WITNESSES

For the Department:

1. Jacques LaBerge

2. Sgt. Dennis Duarte

3. Lt. Todd Knight
4. Sgt. [redacted]
5. Richard Bray
6. [redacted]

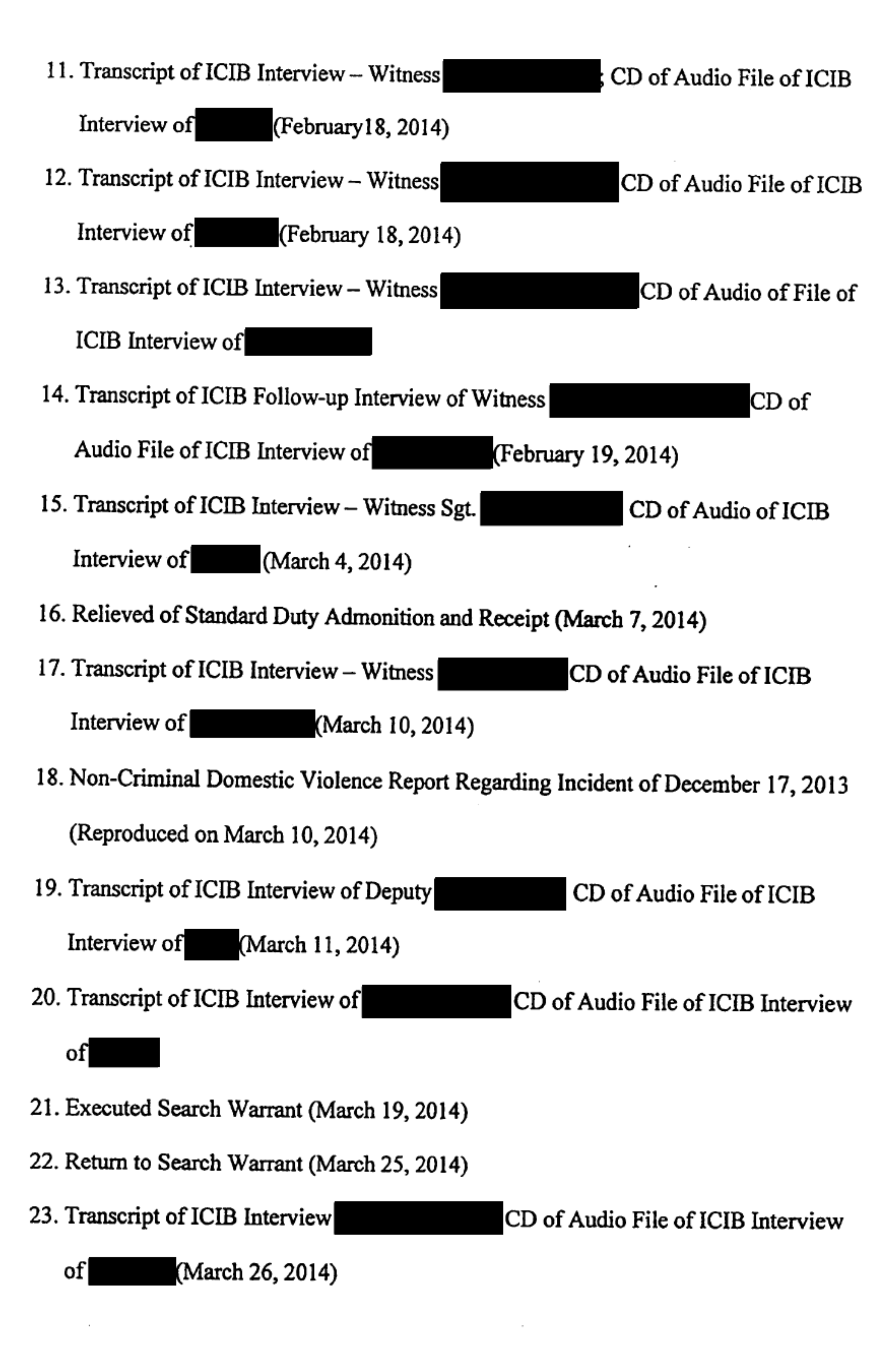
For the Appellant:

1. Gregory Scott Springer
2. The Appellant

EXHIBITS

For the Department:

1. Letter of Intention (May 13, 2015)
2. Letter of Imposition (September 18, 2015)
3. Discharge Memo & Disposition Sheet (May 12, 2015)
4. Incident Report (February 1, 2014)
5. Interview of Witness [redacted] Regarding Criminal Incident at Mabel's Roadhouse Bar (February 4, 2014)
6. Transcript of ICIB Interview of Witness [redacted] CD of Audio file of [redacted] Interview (February 7, 2014)
7. Request for IAB Investigation and/or Criminal Monitor (February 7, 2014)
8. Request for ICIB Investigation (February 10, 2014)
9. Transcript of ICIB Interview-Victim [redacted]; CD of Audio File of ICIB Interview of [redacted] (February 10, 2014)
10. Transcript of ICIB Interview – Witnesses [redacted] & [redacted] CD of Audio file of ICIB Interview of Rice & Huss (February 13, 2014)



11. Transcript of ICIB Interview – Witness ; CD of Audio File of ICIB Interview of (February18, 2014)
12. Transcript of ICIB Interview – Witness CD of Audio File of ICIB Interview of (February 18, 2014)
13. Transcript of ICIB Interview – Witness CD of Audio of File of ICIB Interview of
14. Transcript of ICIB Follow-up Interview of Witness CD of Audio File of ICIB Interview of (February 19, 2014)
15. Transcript of ICIB Interview – Witness Sgt. CD of Audio of ICIB Interview of (March 4, 2014)
16. Relieved of Standard Duty Admonition and Receipt (March 7, 2014)
17. Transcript of ICIB Interview – Witness CD of Audio File of ICIB Interview of (March 10, 2014)
18. Non-Criminal Domestic Violence Report Regarding Incident of December 17, 2013 (Reproduced on March 10, 2014)
19. Transcript of ICIB Interview of Deputy CD of Audio File of ICIB Interview of (March 11, 2014)
20. Transcript of ICIB Interview of CD of Audio File of ICIB Interview of
21. Executed Search Warrant (March 19, 2014)
22. Return to Search Warrant (March 25, 2014)
23. Transcript of ICIB Interview CD of Audio File of ICIB Interview of (March 26, 2014)

24. ICIB Summary Sheet (Approved April 25, 2014)

25. Charge Evaluation Sheets (May16, 2014)

26. ICIB Complaint Report & Supplemental Report (Approved May 22, 2014)

27. Transcript of IAB Interview of Witness [redacted] CD of Audio File of IAB Interview of [redacted] CD of IAB Interview of [redacted] (April 3, 2015)

28. Transcript of IAB Interview of Subject [redacted] CD of Audio File of IB Interview of Appellant (April 9, 2015)

29. IAB Interview-Witness Deputy [redacted] CD of Audio File of IAB Interview of [redacted] (April 12, 2015)

30. Personnel Investigation Report (April 20, 2015)

31. IAM Investigation Summary

32. <u>Finding of executed Search Warrant of Appellant's Home; Handwritten List of Witnesses Contact Information</u>

33. List of Communication Between Appellant and Witnesses

34. Text from Appellant to [redacted]

35. <u>Finding from Executed Search Warrant of Appellant's Home,</u> Notice to Appear for Driving Ticket Issued to [redacted] Notice to Appear.

36. Criminal History of Suspect [redacted]

37. Criminal History of Suspect [redacted]

38. Criminal History of [redacted]

39. Primer on the [redacted] Motorcycle Gang

40. Appellant's DMV Report

41. Image of Appellant's Tattoos (Not Admitted)

42. Employee Training Data Inquiry for the Appellant

43. LA Receipt of Policy

44. April 1, 1996 Policy on Prohibited Association and Fraternization

45. Compact Disc

46. Declaration of [REDACTED]

47. Letter of Intent dated March 18, 2017

48. Education Based Settlement dated February 3, 2014

49. Twenty-two (22) day suspension dated November 12, 2017

50. Education Based Discipline dated February 3, 2014

51. Letter of Intent dated February 20, 2014

For the Appellant:

A. Transcript of ICIB Interview-Dept. [REDACTED] CD of Audio File (March, 2014).

B. Transcript of IAB Interview-Dept. [REDACTED] CD of Audio File (April 9, 2015)

C. Transcript of ICIB Interview-Dept. [REDACTED] CD of Audio (March 6, 2014)

D. Transcript of ICIB Interview-Deputy [REDACTED] CD of Audio File (March 4, 2014)

E. Transcript of ICIB Interview-Sgt. [REDACTED] CD of Audio File (March 4, 2014)

F. Transcript of ICIB Interview-[REDACTED] CD of Audio File (February 25, 2014)

G. Transcript of ICIB Interview-[REDACTED] CD of Audio File (February 27, 2014)

H. Photo of Mabel's Roadhouse 1

I. Photo of Mabel's Roadhouse 2

J. Photo of Mabel's Roadhouse 3

K. Photo of Mabel's Roadhouse 4

L. Transcript of ICIB Interview-[REDACTED] CD of Audio File (February 18, 2014)

M. [redacted] Facebook Page Information

N. [redacted] Facebook Page 1/16/2014

O. [redacted] Facebook Page 10/5/2013

P. [redacted] Facebook Page 10/7/2013

Q. [redacted] Facebook Page 12/1/2014

R. Performance Evaluations

S. District Attorney Rejection

SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY PRESENTED

Chief Jacques Laberge

LaBerge, the decision maker, noted the Appellant had previously been disciplined for having been in possession of a citizen's flashlight, an incident regarding a foot pursuit incident, and for having been under the influence while off duty. An internal and criminal investigation were initiated after a victim reported being assaulted by the Appellant. The D.A. subsequently declined to prosecute believing the case could not prove a case beyond a reasonable doubt.

The investigation found the Appellant had been at Schooner's bar with several of his friends, including [redacted] a lifelong friend who [redacted] and [redacted] another who had a [redacted] During his interview, [redacted] admitted to their association and [redacted] said he had met up with the Appellant on numerous bike riding events and other times. His [redacted] was also there with [redacted] her new [redacted] After friends of the Appellant went to follow [redacted] into the restroom to threaten him, the Appellant and the bouncer went in as well to prevent a possible incident. In doing the Appellant said he was "playing police." Leaving Schooners, the Appellant's group went to Maples', another bar. It was

there that night that [redacted] was struck by the Appellant and then knocked unconscious by several of his friends.

Even if a deputy is off-duty, he still is required to remain a professional, which includes taking action when a crime is being committed. In this case the Appellant should have both prevented the others from the stomping on Martin's head and approached the officers who responded to report the assault what he had witnessed. He was found to have the Department's fraternization policy when he associated with members of the [redacted] a motorcycle gang involved in serious crime. The policy prohibit meeting those with an "open and notorious reputation," included those who everyone knows has been or is involved in criminal activity. Laberge did not know if the [redacted] gang was specifically discussed with the Appellant, still he believed the Appellant should have known not to associate with them per his academy training, written policy, and briefings he received. When a policy is revised, an email link is sent to the employees and it is their responsibility to be aware of it. Even though the Appellant said during his interview he had not been so trained, an employee is responsible for knowing policies. He acknowledged this obligation and admitted he should not have been around them.

LaBerge believed the Appellant knew that "[redacted]" was a member of the [redacted] and stated so during his interview. After a search warrant was issued, the Department found a traffic citation issued to [redacted] as well as phone records noting calls the Appellant had with numerous witnesses. The Appellant made false and misleading statements in that they contradicted those made by other witnesses and the phone records. He obstructed an investigation when he called and told his [redacted] another deputy, about what had happened and who he had been associating with that night [redacted] was attacked. He violated the policy on General Behavior when he associated with known felons when people knew he was a deputy and as such his actions in turn

negatively affected the Department's credibility. The disorderly conduct policy was violated with his involvement with certain individuals and the fight at Maples. He fell short in adhering to the policies on Obedience to Laws and Orders and the Department's Core Values when he became involved in the assault, fraternized with known felons, and obstructed the investigation. A failure to adhere to any of the policies cited in the disciplinary letter could result in discharge.

During his Skelly the Appellant did not take responsibility for his actions, believing the witnesses were conspiring against him. If had some bias against the Appellant, LaBerge would have considered this argument, but he did not have any information showing the two had been in contact prior to this incident. did not tell the officers on scene the Appellant had punched him. The fact that he did not originally report it did not affect the way LaBerge looked at his credibility given those who are intoxicated can often have difficulty in remembering. It also did not bother LaBerge that could not identify the Appellant from a line up since a photograph may not have been reflective of how the person looked that night. Even though gave multiple versions of what he saw, he still was credible.

was paroled in the Summer of 2013. The Appellant admitted to having had an ongoing relationship with him which included having taken a trip to the river and gone on motorcycle rides together. He could not recall if there was specific evidence which showed the Appellant knew of status. The Appellant also admitted that was a friend who had donated to a charity ride for another deputy. LaBerge did not have any evidence the Appellant knew either or were gang members beyond the conversations he had with his wife and the free services he was getting from which could be a problem. After having being observed at the home of a member, an investigator told the Appellant told him to stay away from that premises since it was under surveillance.

Many of the names found on a list in the Appellant's home were also on his phone records. As to the ticket issued to [redacted] by another deputy and also found in the home, there was no evidence the Appellant tried to contact the issuing officer or somehow get it dismissed. The Appellant said [redacted] had given him the citation and asked that he speak to the motorcycle deputy about it. Per department policy he should not even taken the document. Laberge agreed that if one did not have actual knowledge of such an event, there was no need to report it.

Sgt. Dennis Duarte

While assigned to ICIB Duarte interviewed several witnesses including [redacted] who said he had been talking to the Appellant before he and another person beat him up. Duarte did not consider it unusual for [redacted] to have waited to file his complaint until the next day given he had been intoxicated. [redacted] never gave any indication that he remembered the Appellant from a previous meeting or that he had any bias against the Santa Clarita Station.

Duarte acknowledged there were a number of inconsistencies among the various witness statements. [redacted] did not identify the Appellant as one who had assaulted him until he filed the complaint. Although the description [redacted] gave of the assailant was vague, he did say an officer had been involved in the fight with [redacted] [redacted] said the Appellant contacted her using text and phone messages. Although he denied it, she said he told her that investigators might be contacting her about the [redacted] incident, and if so, he wanted her to cover for him. [redacted] said that while she was at Schooners, one of the Appellant's associates challenged her about coming to the bar with her [redacted] [redacted] who was with the Appellant, had told her boyfriend he was going to slam him in a mirror in the restroom, before the bouncer intervened. The Appellant also confronted [redacted] before having a private conversation with him regarding their relationship.

Duarte learned that was a of the Appellant and had occasionally associated with him after he left who had also been with the Appellant at Mabel's, had at least one Their relationship was limited to mostly riding motorcycles and donating money for a charity ride. Duarte confirmed the was known as a motorcycle gang with a criminal history.

As to the incident at Mabel's, and told Duarte that made a comment about the Appellant's mustache prior to the assault. did not see the Appellant strike but afterwards did see two others assault him in the presence of the Appellant, who did not step in to prevent it from happening. was not able to identify either Appellant or from the line-up. said he had struck , but neither he nor indicated that the Appellant ever did so. said they got into it with him because of what had occurred at the bar and after had talked to the Appellant.

said the Appellant contacted him after the fight to see if he remembered the incident and to let him know he was being investigated. There were some inconsistencies in statements, who said he would sometimes forget things. Initially he said the Appellant did not assault then later said he did when the Appellant punched in self-defense. who was in the process of from the Appellant, said he called and told her that he had seen the people involved in an assault, but that he had stayed out of it. When the Appellant called he said he was freaking out and might lose his job. She did not understand why, since she did not believe he had done anything wrong. After getting a warrant the Appellant's home was searched where a list of some of the individuals, who had been present during the bar incident, was discovered along with a traffic citation issues to by another officer..

Duarte agreed it was confusing as to who and when someone hit [redacted] The only two witnesses who saw the Appellant make contact were [redacted] and [redacted] Duarte did not look into whether [redacted] had a bias against the Appellant or other officers and agreed it could have been relevant. [redacted] told him during his interview that he had a DUI, which occurred on January 19th. Duarte had not previously reviewed some Facebook comments posted by [redacted] which contained some negative statements about the police. If he had known about it, he may have used the information to ask additional questions as to whether he initiated the fight. [redacted] had told Duarte he had not previously been involved in another bar fight. He agreed there were several emails which referred to one and that it would have been relevant had he known about them.

Deputy [redacted] one of the responding deputies, said that [redacted] told her that those who had beat him up had fled. She asked, but the Appellant told her he had not seen anything. Deputy [redacted] said [redacted] told him he had been beaten up by two people, who had fled. At that time [redacted] did not believe there was any evidence that identified the Appellant as being a suspect. [redacted] who had been the Appellant's date, saw [redacted] run up to the Appellant, who then raised his arms. She did not see him hit [redacted] [redacted] also did not see the Appellant strike him.

It was Duarte's opinion that the Appellant should have said something that night, that he had no doubt that the Appellant was hanging around people who had been [redacted] and that he attempted to influence witnesses.

Lt. Todd Knight

Knight believed the Internal Affair's investigation found the Appellant had helped mentor [redacted], a [redacted], after [redacted] and while [redacted] without getting

the . The Appellant had admitted to having contacts with members of a motorcycle gang regarding fixing his bike and his missing bike seat. After the Appellant learned about a surveillance regarding the group, he told another friend, about it, which was inappropriate. One of the reasons for prohibiting fraternizing with such people was to prevent that type of information ending up in the wrong hands.

The report showed that only and said they saw the attack. The Appellant did not report this incident to the Department until later even though he called his wife and discussed it with her that same night. There was no evidence the remembered meeting the Appellant earlier. The Appellant had said that after he was alerted about and he quit hanging out with him. He had met through a charity motorcycle ride and did not know had .

Sgt.

characterized the Appellant as having been a very hard worker and one who was proactive in fighting crime. When responded to the fight call at Mable's it was a chaotic scene. He saw the Appellant, but he did not approach him. The Appellant did not give him any information about the fight. Martin did not indicate the Appellant had hit or done anything to him. Several witnesses had stated that the attacker had left in a black truck. It appeared to that the Appellant had not been involved. Given the incident was a misdemeanor and the victim did not want to prosecute, believed the job of the responding deputies was done.

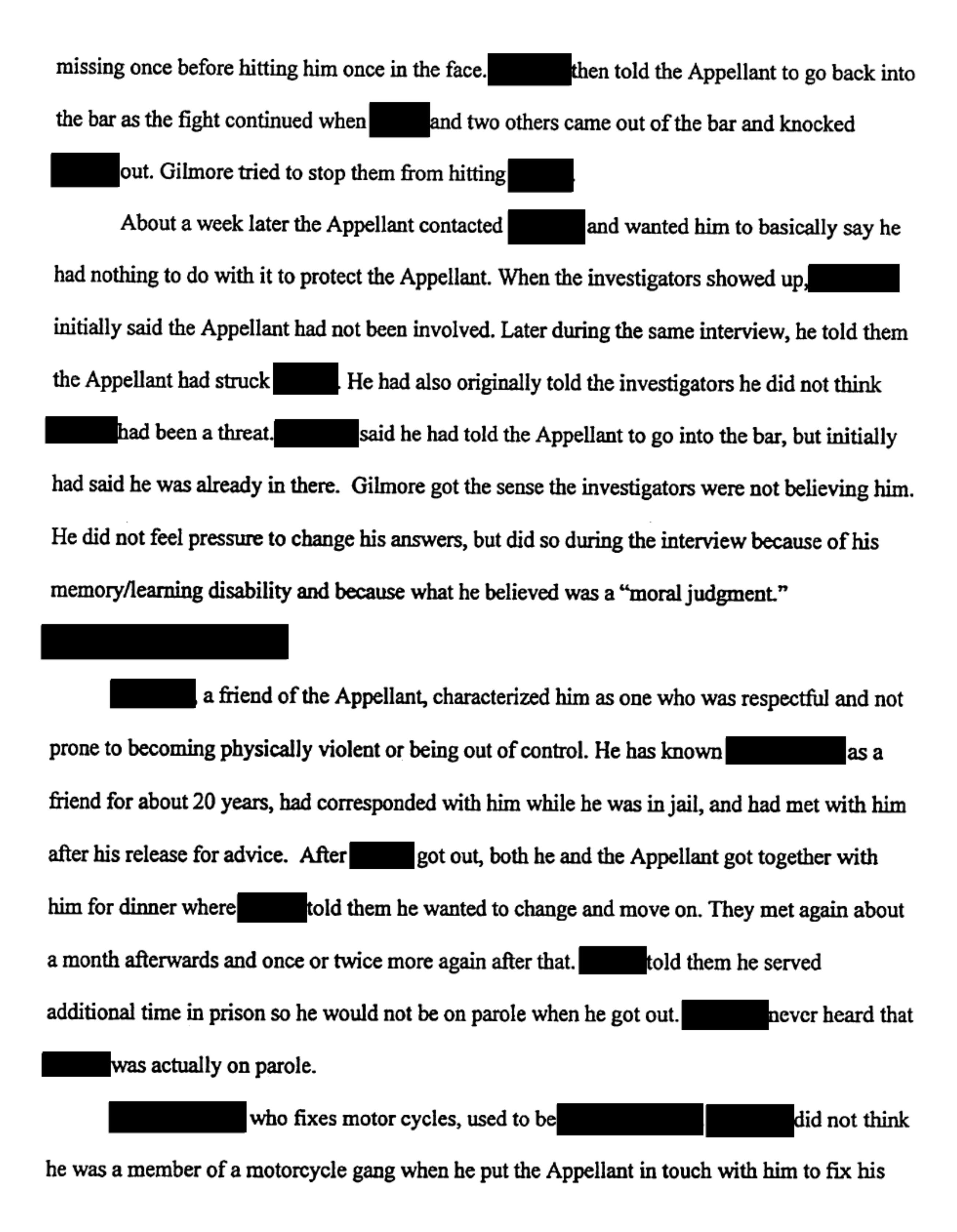
The next day he told the Appellant that Mabel's was not a bar he should patronize and that if an off-duty officer is present during such situations, there was a safety concern both for his safety and that of the responder. During their training recruits are told which bars they should not go to, but could not recall if Mabels' had been included. The Appellant told him he

had got there after the fight had happened and had not been a witness. A few days after the incident he heard from someone that the Appellant had been involved. [REDACTED] agreed that if a deputy sees a fight, he should take some type of action or be interviewed as a witness.

[REDACTED] never met "[REDACTED]", but was present when the Appellant called him to say he would not run plates for him. The Appellant told [REDACTED] about the incident at Schooner's bar where some of the people he was with had followed another patron with into a bathroom before he went in to break it up. On several occasions the Appellant also talked to him about what had happened at Mabel's including that he knew his friend [REDACTED] was involved in the [REDACTED] fight and they were the same persons he was involved with at Schooner's. He also told him he had stated to investigators that he was on a back porch when "[REDACTED]" got into a fight. It seemed to [REDACTED] then as if the Appellant had been in a location where he should have been able to have seen what happened and that there was more to the story. Later that same day the Appellant's story changed and the Appellant gave him more details. He did not specifically say he saw the fight. [REDACTED] added that is the Appellant told Internal Affatirs he had not been aware of or that he had not been involved in the fight, then that would that be different from what he had told him.

[REDACTED] characterized the Appellant as having been a good and hard-working officer, who was also very knowledgeable and that he knew which lines not to cross. The Appellant told him he knew the President of that [REDACTED] gang and that he was pushing dope.

On the day of the incident, [REDACTED] was working as a bouncer at Mabel's when he saw the Appellant, who he knew was a deputy, talking to [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] complimented the Appellant on his mustache just prior to running up on him. As he did the Appellant tried to strike [REDACTED]



missing once before hitting him once in the face. then told the Appellant to go back into the bar as the fight continued when and two others came out of the bar and knocked out. Gilmore tried to stop them from hitting .

About a week later the Appellant contacted and wanted him to basically say he had nothing to do with it to protect the Appellant. When the investigators showed up, initially said the Appellant had not been involved. Later during the same interview, he told them the Appellant had struck . He had also originally told the investigators he did not think had been a threat. said he had told the Appellant to go into the bar, but initially had said he was already in there. Gilmore got the sense the investigators were not believing him. He did not feel pressure to change his answers, but did so during the interview because of his memory/learning disability and because what he believed was a "moral judgment."

, a friend of the Appellant, characterized him as one who was respectful and not prone to becoming physically violent or being out of control. He has known as a friend for about 20 years, had corresponded with him while he was in jail, and had met with him after his release for advice. After got out, both he and the Appellant got together with him for dinner where told them he wanted to change and move on. They met again about a month afterwards and once or twice more again after that. told them he served additional time in prison so he would not be on parole when he got out. never heard that was actually on parole.

who fixes motor cycles, used to be did not think he was a member of a motorcycle gang when he put the Appellant in touch with him to fix his

bike. Later in 2011 [redacted] learned [redacted] belonged to [redacted] and subsequently told the Appellant after he was invited to a barbeque where 50-70 bikers showed up.

The Appellant

The Appellant was hired in April of 2001 and started working at the Twin Towers before going to patrol in Santa Clarita Valley. He believed he may have received some training on fraternization while at the academy where he learned one was not have any contact with a former inmate until thirty (30) days after his release. He had some difficulty during his IA interview recalling details of the incident at Mabel's given the amount of time that had passed since then.

The Appellant had known [redacted] for about for 25 years and did not believe he had been involved in a gang. He never contacted him [redacted] but did so in the Summer of 2013 after [redacted] called him. He believed [redacted] had made improvements in his life. [redacted] told him he had [redacted] an extra year so as to [redacted]. Based on what he had been told about AB 109, he did not believe their continued association was inappropriate since it had been about two months since [redacted] had been released from prison. The Appellant first found out about [redacted] around 2007 or 2008 when [redacted] told him that [redacted] his motorcycle mechanic, was in the club. He had thought they were just a club and not a gang. [redacted] was never mentioned during his training. He met [redacted] at a motorcycle shop where he indicated he wanted to participate in a charity bike ride for another deputy who was dying. He did not know about [redacted] criminal background. As far as other contacts, the Appellant called [redacted] about his donation, saw him at the charity ride, and then met again several months later when they would ride their motorcycles together. He does not believe he violated the fraternization policy here either because he did not know a lot about him. After [redacted] got

a speeding ticket from another officer, the Appellant told him he would "Look into it." He had it for a couple of weeks but did not do anything with it or about it.

The first time he saw " " was in a bar, where after he left, the Appellant noticed his bike seat was missing. Assuming had taken it, he called who he knew could get in touch with him. told him that was going to apologize and give the seat back. He did not file a police report since it was a lot easier for him to get it back himself. When he went to 's house to retrieve it, he knew he was a member, but at that point was still trying to figure out if they were gang. He did not believe he had violate policy in doing so in that he thought was just a club. A few days later sent him an email which let him know that the home the Appellant had gone to was under surveillance and asked him what had happened. It was at that time that the Appellant first realized the was a gang.

On Jan 29, 2014, he went with, , , and others to dinner before going to Schooners. While there , his , was there making a scene with , her new . He told everyone it did not bother him, but , who knew her from high school, said something to her about disrespecting the Appellant. The Appellant told him to let it be. When went into the restroom he was followed in by and . To prevent a fight the Appellant got the bouncer to go intervene. He sat then sat down with before shaking hands then walking out. The Appellant later told investigators in doing so he was "playing police" because he felt it was his obligation to ensure nothing happened whether on duty or not.

Afterwards his group went to Mabel's. Someone told him was too close to the girls and had been spitting in their drinks. The Appellant then walked outside with when, out of the corner of his eye, he saw someone running up on him, and appearing drunk. The

Appellant put his hands up and jumped back, not sure if he was going to get hit. The Appellant told him not run up on people, before walking back into the bar where he talked to [redacted]. After someone then yelled there was a fight. [redacted] and [redacted] ran outside while the Appellant stayed inside for his own safety, not wanting to get involved. He could not see what was happening outside. He did not believe he had a responsibility to investigate the fight since he had been inside the bar and not on duty.

After the deputies arrived the Appellant went outside and saw [redacted] and another officer and asked her what happened. [redacted] had told them that three or four Hispanics had beaten him up before leaving in a truck. He saw [redacted] on the back of the ambulance using obscenities against the firemen, but did not see [redacted] or [redacted] or [redacted]. He stayed outside for 5 -10 minutes before leaving and going over to [redacted] house. It was not until two days after the incident and during a meeting in his supervisor's office that he learned his friends and he had been accused of having beaten [redacted] up. He let Lieutenant Lewis know the names of those who had been involved in a fight and that they could come in and clear his name. Lewis told him he should get something in writing, but the Appellant was not able to get any such statement.

He called [redacted] in order to piece together what had happened and not to tell her to cover for him. A lot of the interview statements his [redacted] made were false. He did call her that same night, but did not tell her his friends had been involved in a fight. He did not ask [redacted] to lie for him and did not try to influence his or anyone's statements since the IA investigation had yet to begin. He knew though that people were asking about what had happened. He was asked about an orange motorcycle, but did not tell the Lietentant that [redacted] was both and Hispanic and had one. He could not recall having met [redacted] prior to the incident, but believed such an interaction could explain why he accused the Appellant of beating him up.

As to how this case has affected him, he does not feel safe any longer in that [redacted] has put a "green light" out on him and because of all the arrests he has made. He believes the Sheriff's Department can be crooked when they want to hide things.

The Appellant understood that Department policy required an off-duty officer to take a report or action if he becomes aware of danger to person or property. Even though the responding officers told him that three Hispanic males were involved, he admitted that he did not tell them about those he had been with. He also admitted to twice responding there had been no incident, by which he meant it had not been "his" incident. He did not know the person sitting in the ambulance was the same one who had run up to him. He understood the policy against fraternization, but thought [redacted] had been released more than 30 days prior to them having got together during the summer of 2013. He did not know that same policy required written authorization form a supervisor. The trip he took to the lake with [redacted] was in mid-September. As to [redacted] ticket, he took it so he would not bug him about it. He understood he was not to do favors like that. He first said he did not have contact with [redacted] after the incident, but then admitted to having met him in March. The Appellant understood he was not to interfere in an investigation. He did not pass any information along to investigators because he did not get any.

POSITION OF THE PARTIES

It is the Department's position that the Appellant was discharged for a series of egregious and reprehensible acts, the totality of which raised serious questions as to his character. Since he can no longer be trusted, the Department cannot bear the risk of his continued employment. He refused to accept responsibility and instead alleged that witnesses had conspired against him He did not dispute that he had associated with felons and gang members without authorization and in violation of the fraternization policy. Even though it was his contention that he was unaware

of the rule which applied to known gang members and those adjudged of a crime, an officer has an affirmative duty to know all such policies and that they were available to him on-line.

He intentionally withheld from Internal Affairs the name of his friends, who had been involved in the attempted assault and battery in the bathroom at Schooners. Knowing what they had done, he still continued to socialize with them. Both [redacted] and [redacted], each of whom had a criminal record, admitted to their relationship with the Appellant and later taking part in the assault on [redacted]. His version as to when he first met [redacted] after prison was not credible. Neither was his assertion that he did not know [redacted] was a gang until [redacted] wrote him, which was something this detective denied in his declaration. He associated with at least two [redacted] gang members, a "[redacted]" and a "[redacted]" regarding repairs to his bike or securing the return of its seat. Per [redacted] testimony, it appeared as if the Appellant had a close relationship with "[redacted]"

The Appellant's account of what happened at Mabel's was rife with contradictions. He clearly knew who had assaulted [redacted] in that the two Hispanic males, who had accompanied him, had taken off in the same type of vehicle described by witnesses. Despite having represented to the Department that he had not been involved in the fight at Mabel's, several hours after the incident he told [redacted] one of his friends had got into a fight that night at that location. Given what the Appellant's told him had occurred changed over time, it was [redacted]s belief the Appellant was either lying or not telling him everything. The Appellant admitted to not having taken any police action at Mabel's after hearing someone yell there was a fight as he had done at Schooners. As to his contention that [redacted] had a motive to lie given their previous contact, their meeting occurred four years earlier, had been in a different context, and had been when the Appellant was wearing different clothing.

testified he saw the Appellant strike in the face. At no time, did he see the Appellant attempt to intercede after his friends began to violently attack . Although initially said the Appellant had not been involved in the fight so as not to get him in trouble, later during the same interview he said that he had. changed his statement out of an obligation and sense of "moral judgment" to tell the truth. In addition corroborated testimony. testified the Appellant never approached him or any of the other responding officers with information about the fight. The Appellant told him he arrived only after it had occurred and twice he told there had been no incident at Mabel's. His assertion that he was not aware that and had struck was not credible. During a phone call with his wife that same night he told her that his friends had been involved in the battery. Besides his wife, he also told that " " had been involved in the fight.

The Appellant obstructed the Department's investigation by contacting a number of witnesses. He admitted to talking to several of them after initially stating he had not communicated with anyone. interpreted his phone call with the Appellant after the fight to mean he wanted him to lie to the investigators about what really happened. Even though the Appellant alleged he did it to get answers and to help him figure the incident out, he did not pass the information he got from them along to investigators. Besides withholding information he told his supervising officers that he arrived at Mabel's after the fight, had no involvement in the battery and did not know how it started. The Appellant initially said his friends never provided him with information of the incident. If that was true, then the only way he would have known it occurred was to have been on the scene.

Discharge was a possible discipline for each of the policy sections violated, including fraternization, which as LaBerge noted, was the only permitted penalty. The Appellant's own

testimony showed he still failed to grasp the seriousness of his conduct. His actions have irreparably compromised his professional integrity. He can no longer exercise sound judgment.

The Appellant believes the discipline should be rescinded given the Department relied on inaccurate information throughout its investigation and that it failed to meet the requisite burden to show the facts in its discharge letter were true. The Appellant was unaware the fraternization policy had changed since his date of hire in 2001 and there was no evidence he was informed about the same. Since the training records preceded the change, he should only be held accountable for the earlier document and its 30-day prohibition. The Appellant's contact with was in late summer or sometime in September when he was also under the impression that was not on parole because he had served extra time. The Department did not prove he had knowledge of being on parole or had a notorious reputation for criminal activity. After his release was making improvements in his life. He only knew for a short time and there was also no evidence the Appellant knew he was involved in criminal activity.

The Appellant did not know that was a gang when he spoke to and When he talked to the former, he knew he had a connection with , but as a club and not a gang. He did not learn it was a gang until informed him otherwise. He only contacted them to get his seat back. There was no proof that he ever met with them again.

As to 's assault, the only two witnesses who said the Appellant struck him were unreliable or biased. 's testimony that he was struck by the Appellant was hearsay and cannot be relied upon in any finding of fact. He did not report that fact that evening. Besides having been drunk and causing a disturbance that night, he was inconsistent about whether he had been kicked by the Appellant and could not identify him in a lineup. had a bias against police officers and a reason to lie after having recently received a DUI and served three

days for a bench warrant on a ticket after the Appellant had arrested him. [redacted]'s statements that the Appellant struck [redacted] were also unreliable. It was only after Sgt. Duarte kept pressing him during his interview that he said that had been the case. His testimony was wildly inconsistent from what [redacted] had provided. He had a disability which contributed to memory problems. There were statements from other witnesses, including [redacted], who was present outside, who said they did not see the Appellant strike him. [redacted] said the Appellant was by the door and [redacted] said they were inside together at the time. Given the D. A. believed these other witnesses, the decision was made not to prosecute.

The Appellant had no obligation to report what occurred at Mabel's since he had no information at the time about what had happened. LaBerge noted one must have actual knowledge of such an event before being required to report it. Here the Appellant was unsure who was involved or of the details of what happened. When he did learn several days later who was involved, he gave the suspect information to Captain Lewis as per policy. There was no need for him to have notified the Department about what occurred in the bathroom at Schooners since there was no criminal threat or a physical assault. The Appellant's actions deescalated what at that time could had potentially been a bad situation. He did not participate in any disorderly behavior since he was inside Mabel's, off-duty, and not involved when the fight it broke out.

The Appellant did talk to [redacted], [redacted], and [redacted] after the Mable's incident, but only to find out what happened and not to dissuade them from talking. There was no evidence which proved his denial of trying to improperly persuade a witness was inaccurate. At the time, he was unaware any IA investigation had begun, only that someone had called and said he had assaulted [redacted]. He did not make any false statements. Since he did not hit [redacted] the Department cannot prove what he said to the contrary was untrue. As to his statement that he was inside the

bar and did not see the fight, multiple witnesses said he was not involved, so again he was being truthful when he told Deputy [redacted] he did not know what happened.

In assessing the discipline the Department did not consider mitigating factors such as [redacted] bias against the Appellant, the effect of alcohol, the inconsistency in the statements presented by the Department's witnesses, that no criminal charges were ever filed against the Appellant, and the amount of time which passed from the incident to when he was interviewed.

DISCUSSION

In its disciplinary notice of discharge dated September 18, 2015 the Department itemized a number of policy violations which were both serious in nature and supported by multiple factual allegations. Although not every assertion was sufficiently supported by the record, the majority were substantiated and justified some sort of disciplinary action.

1. **Section 3-01/03.05 (General Behavior) and/or Section 3-01/050.85 Fraternization and Prohibited Associations.**

The policy on General Behavior was short, but specific. One was not to "behave privately or officially in such a manner as to bring discredit upon himself or the Department" (Dept. 44). When the Applicant engaged in behavior contrary to the published policy on fraternization and prohibited associations, he harmed both his reputation and that of his Department.

The Appellant admitted to having associated with [redacted] and [redacted], both of whom were convicted felons, without ever having disclosed these contacts to his unit commander as the policy required (Dept. 2 page 9). He acknowledged having met up with [redacted] a longtime friend, several times after his release from prison. [redacted] confirmed the same. Besides being with both individuals on January 20, 2104 when they went to two the bars together, he acknowledged having socialized with them on other occasions. As to [redacted], they would go on

motorcycle rides together. For several weeks the Appellant had in his possession a traffic citation, which had been issued to [redacted] by another officer. The Appellant told Internal Affairs he took the ticket so he could talk to the deputy, but later said he did so in order that [redacted] would quit bugging him about it. Although there was no evidence the Appellant ever talked to the issuing officer or somehow tried to assist [redacted] with getting it dismissed, the fact that he even accepted the ticket indicated their relationship was more than just a passing one.

The Appellant put forth several defenses against these violations. They included that he was unware of the certain specifics in the fraternization policy, including the requirement of letting his supervisor know if such a contact was made. The Appellant also said he had not been aware of the changes made to the policy in 2013, which added those who had been convicted of a felony. Neither was persuasive in that he signed off on an acknowledgment of having received the policy back in 2001 and LaBerge noted that deputies receive in-service training on the same (Ex. 43 & 44). The Appellant acknowledged being trained on it early in his career and did not contest the Department's contention that all of its policies are on-line with updates sent to all personnel (Dept. 42).

The weight of the evidence showed the Appellant knew that [redacted] fell within one or more of the policies prohibited classifications. Besides knowing he was a felon, the policy had always mandated that a deputy was not to contact anyone who had been released from custody in the prior 30 days (Dept. 44). The Appellant's position that he thought [redacted] had been out of prison longer than this minimum was not persuasive. [redacted] stated the Appellant and he had met [redacted] within two weeks to a month after his release, which was in August 11, 2013 (Dept. Ex. 36 p.2). In addition, the Appellant was inconsistent with when they met. In one instance he said in had been in late Summer, which would have been consistent with the month of August

and Springer's recollection. Later the Appellant said it had been about two months, which would have been in October or later than when he testified the two of them went to the lake.

The Appellant also unsuccessfully argued that his contacts with [REDACTED] were appropriate in that he did not believe he was on parole. [REDACTED] had told him he stayed in jail longer to prevent from having to be put on that status. The Appellant acceptance of such a representation was not totally unreasonable in that he thought there had been some legislative changes which gave inmates such an option. In addition [REDACTED] said that when the three of them had dinner [REDACTED] told them he was not on parole (*Trans* 106:25 -107:19). Although the "[REDACTED] [REDACTED]" indicated that [REDACTED] as of August 11, 2013, there was no indication the Appellant had accessed to this record. Even if one were to give the Appellant the benefit of the doubt as to knowledge of [REDACTED] date and/or [REDACTED] he and others knew [REDACTED]

Despite the Appellant's characterization that he had changed, [REDACTED] had "an open and [REDACTED]" that could not be so easily discounted as [REDACTED] at Mabel's. Having fallen into several prohibited classifications then for association purposes, prior to having made any contact with [REDACTED] the Appellant should have secured his Unit Commander's permission, which was something he admitted never requesting (*5/19/16 Trans., 197:15-18*).

As to [REDACTED], the Appellant stated he did not know this person had a felony record. Even though [REDACTED] had joined him on the charity bike ride and would see him in drinking establishments, there was no clear indication the Appellant was aware of his criminal background. Although there was some evidence to the contrary, they both denied knowing each other very well. Their relationship was sufficiently close for [REDACTED] to have asked him to look

into his citation and to have threatened [redacted] who was [redacted] the Appellant's [redacted] in Schooner's bar. Still LaBerge testified he had no evidence the Appellant knew [redacted] was a gang member and Duarte said he did not believe the two of them were around each other that much. It was possible then that he did not know about [redacted] criminal background and as such, their contacts, though probably unwise, fell short of this policy prohibition. Still and as LaBerge noted, the Appellant's awareness that just [redacted] was a [redacted] and one with a notorious reputation was sufficient for disciplinary action under this policy (*5/17/16 Trans., 236:10-14*).

2. **Section 3-01/03.05 (General Behavior) and/or Section 3-01/050.85 (Fraternization and Prohibited Associations).**

The Department correctly argued the Appellant violated the same policies when he associated with members of the [redacted] motorcycle gang, specifically a "[redacted]" and another individual named "[redacted]" The weight of the evidence supported the assertion that when the Appellant met them he knew they were gang members. He was observed at [redacted]s home while it was under surveillance by law enforcement. His argument that at the time of the contact he did not know they both were members of [redacted] or that it was a "gang" with an open and notorious reputation was unpersuasive for several reasons. The first was that after he suspected that [redacted] had stolen the seat off his motorcycle while inside a local bar, he went and met with John over at his motorcycle repair shop and asked him for his help in getting it back. In doing so he must have most likely known that [redacted], as president of [redacted], would know the location of a fellow member. [redacted] testified the Appellant told him that he knew [redacted] was the [redacted] president. In addition, [redacted] stated he introduced [redacted] to the Appellant, who he found out in 2011 was a member of [redacted] gang and that the Appellant contacted him after that date, at least by phone, for what [redacted] believed was an attempt to retrieve his seat (*8/18/16 Trans* 127

5 – 20). The Appellant admitted to getting ████'s address from ███, who contacted ████ and told him to apologize to the Appellant and return the seat. When the Appellant went to ████'s home to retrieve it, he was given his own plus another. His explanation that he did not report the theft to the Department because it was easier to handle himself, may have been true as far as being the more expeditious route, but it was still a contact that should have been reported.

As to the Appellant's position that he only considered the ████ to have been a "club" and not a "gang" when he contacted them, one indeed should not be held responsible for an association, if at the time, it did not fall within one of the prohibited categories. Given he had patrolled the area for a number of years where the ████ had its clubhouse and that he had participated in training regarding gangs (Dept. Ex. 42), this representation appeared doubtful.

The Appellant initially denied receiving any training on gangs, but the evidence showed and he later admitted that had not been the case. It was unclear if ████ was ever specifically mentioned during those sessions (Dept. 28 p. 56). As with other noted examples, the Appellant's credibility here was also suspect. The Appellant stated he only found out ████ was an actual gang after ████ informed him that was the case via email (Dpt. 28 p. 50). Besides no such email ever being produced, in his declaration ████ denied having sent him such a note and gave several reasons why he could not have sent such a communication at that time (Dept. 46).

Although there was no evidence the Appellant ever contacted either ████ or ████ again after the bike seat incident, it was more likely than not, that he was aware of their membership in ████ and that as a known gang, any such association with either of them was prohibited.

3. Section 3-01/030.05 (General Behavior) and/or Section 3-01/040.90 (Reporting Information) and/or Off Duty incidents; and/or 3-01/030.06 Disorderly Conduct; and/or 3-

01/030.10 (Obedience to Laws, Regulations and Orders (pertaining to Battery 242 C.P.C.) and/or 3-01/000.13 (Professional Conduct – Core Values)

Each of the allegations raised by the Department in support of these policy violations were primarily related to the assault on [redacted] Although the evidence was insufficient to show the Appellant had struck [redacted] he failed to take appropriate police action by not disclosing in a timely fashion what he knew about the incident to the investigating personnel or a supervisor.

As to the initial assault, the information provided by witnesses present that night and those he discussed the matter with later, were conflicting as to whether he ever hit [redacted] Both [redacted] and [redacted] represented it was the Appellant who struck him first. There were several inconsistencies with [redacted] various statements as to what had occurred. Deputy [redacted] one of the responders, said that [redacted] told him he had been beat up by two people who had fled the scene in a black SUV. The Appellant though left with his [redacted] on his motorcycle (Dept. 3 p. 22). It wasn't until [redacted] reported the incident at the station that he identified the Appellant as one of his assailants. In addition, his recollection could well have been faulty in that [redacted] and others characterized [redacted] as having been "extremely intoxicated" that evening (App. B p. 4). The Appellant's belief that [redacted] named him in retaliation for having arrested him four years earlier, was not supported by the evidence given the time that had passed since the encounter and the fact that if there had been such a motive, [redacted] would have initially named him that night.

In addition to the victim, [redacted] also stated he saw Appellant strike [redacted] in the face when the latter ran up to him after having made comments about his mustache. (Dept. 12 p. 17). The Appellant in turn argued [redacted] testimony was also unreliable in that he changed several statements during his interview, including initially saying it was a buddy of the Appellant who first hit [redacted] (Dept. 12 pages 5 & 12). He also originally said the Appellant did not try to

coach him before later stating he had done so (Dept. 12 p. 6-7 and p. 22). It is true that lost his job after the incident, but there was no indication that he was out to get the Appellant. Indeed during the first part of his interview, when he said the Appellant did not strike said he did so in order to protect him (Dept. 12 p. 25). If losing his job was a motivating factor, then he would not have made such a statement at all. More believable was response that he changed his story so as to do the right thing. A review of the transcript indicated there was no real pressure by the investigators to implicate the Appellant.

The statements made by several others who had been present at Mabel's that evening, were somewhat suspect given they were from individuals who had only heard and not seen what actually happened. said she had heard from that the Appellant had struck twice, but she did not actually see it (Dept. 28 p. 8). During his interview though said he did not actually witness the contact (Dept. 25 p. 8). who also was intoxicated that evening, said the Appellant struck but then also said he was not there to see the first punch, which was what had reported (App. 2 p 5.).

Besides the Appellant's own denial, there were others who, at least in part, supported his version of the events. who admitted to hitting told investigators he did not see the Appellant do the same (Dept. 20 p. 49). said she saw the Appellant "throw three punches at like I said, jokingly, with a smile on his fact," but did not see him land one before he walked back into the bar (Dept. 11 p. 6 ; Dept. 26 p. 16 & Dept. 28 p. 48). witnessed the verbal interaction between the Appellant and but never saw the former strike him, only and possibly Orm (App. G p. 5). said she was positive the Appellant did not physically attack (App. F p. 5.). Finally, Dept. said that a waitress working at Mabel's told her the "two that left" were the ones who had been involved in the fight (App. B p.

7). Even Duarte agreed it was confusing as to who and when someone hit [redacted] With all of these contrary statements and since a criminal conviction required a higher level of proof, it was not surprising the District Attorney opted to forgo pressing charges (App. S).

Even if there was not enough to show the Appellant struck [redacted] there was substantial evidence to support the assertion he failed to timely disclose his involvement in the incident. It was [redacted] opinion that since no one identified the Appellant as being a suspect that evening, no action was taken. This was in part because the Appellant chose not to disclose what he knew to [redacted] or the other responders. The Appellant's defense that he did not know anything and thus, could not be faulted for failing to disclose information was inconsistent both with his own actions and the representations of other witnesses. Besides his own admission that he saw [redacted] run up on in him and that he subsequently talked to him, there were others who either witnessed or were told by the Appellant that he had either been involved or knew something of what had occurred.

Although the Appellant initially denied calling her, [redacted] who was in the process of getting [redacted] from him, said he called that very evening and told her he had seen the people involved in an assault, but that he stayed out of it (Dept. 17 p. 56 & Dept. 28 p. 50). [redacted] stated the "... whole incident started with [redacted]" with the Appellant "play fighting," "kind of yelling at him" and going "after him in an aggressive manner" (Dept. 11 pp. 3 - 4). The Appellant told [redacted] while they were in a Jacuzzi later that night "that guy was just acting like crazy and swinging his arms ..." with [redacted] noting the Appellant had been present (Dept. G p. 28). His assertion that he did not recognize [redacted] who was injured and sitting down after the fight on the back of a vehicle, as being the same person he had an interaction with shortly before, was simply not credible. The weight of the evidence showed the Appellant witnessed what had

occurred, but chose not to disclose his own involvement with [redacted] and/or those he knew had been involved in his assault to the responders.

The Appellant argued that since he subsequently identified those who had been involved when he talked to Sgt. Allen, he met the policy's reporting requirements (Dept. 26 p. 37). The problem for the Appellant was that he did not do so "promptly" as the policy also required. This conversation was several days after he had this identifying information. As such, he withheld it for some period of time even though he knew some type of inquiry was already underway.

The Appellant's argument, since there was "no incident," there was nothing to disclose was contrary to the weight of the evidence (Dept. 28 p. 50). The severity of the attack was such that both police and fire responded to the scene. His subsequent attempt to clarify this statement by saying it had not been "his incident" as a rational for failing to disclose information was both untrue and an attempt to skirt his own responsibility. Although [redacted] said the Appellant did not strike [redacted] he told investigators he had been involved (Dept. 20 p.49). The Appellant characterized his intervention earlier that night at Schooner's when he prevented the assault on [redacted] as "playing police." In doing so he effectively acknowledged he had a duty to respond in such situations. This was in direct conflict with his explanations as to why he did not get involved later at Mabel's when he said there was no such obligation while "of-duty" and that he stayed inside so to protect himself. His reliance on the off-duty argument was misplaced in that even on those occasions, the policy stated "appropriate action, depending on the circumstances, may require only accurate observation and becoming an effective witness or informant" (Dept. 2 p. 11). LaBerge also confirmed there was an affirmative duty to take police action in such circumstances (*5/17/16 Tran., 36:20-37:3; 46:1-8*). Even if he was in the bar and as [redacted] stated took no steps to intervene, the Appellant was still was required to report what he knew in a

timely fashion. Waiting several days until his meeting with a supervisor fell short of that obligation.

The Appellant's actions were an "embarrassment" both to the Department and himself in that a number of those present at Mabel's knew he was a deputy. [REDACTED] a member of the public, mirrored the Department in her comments when she stated that individuals in the Appellant's position should be held to a higher standard of behavior (Dept. 11 p.12).

4. Section 3-01/040.76 (Obstructing and Investigation/Influencing Witnesses)

This policy required that an employee "not take any action that would interfere with, delay or obstruct, distort or unduly influence any investigation" It included those who tried to "intimidate or unduly influence" another (Dept. 2 p. 17). The Department cited several conversations the Appellant had with [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] during the period from January 30, 2014 through February 1, 2014 where it believed he attempted to influence those witnesses. After a review of the testimony presented and documents introduced, the weight of the evidence showed there was such interference as to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] but not with regards to Ford.

The record was clear that the Appellant had made a number of phone contacts with several who were present that night at Mabel's (Dept. 33). [REDACTED] received a text from and had a phone call on the night of February 1, 2014 with the Appellant who asked her to tell the Department if they contacted her, that she did not see anything "Cause he doesn't want to be in trouble" (Dept. 11 p. 12). Even though she denied the Appellant threatened her, the policy cited in this instance had no such requirement. A plain reading of her interview transcript supported the position that it was more likely than not that when he did so he was trying to influence this witness. In addition, there was the testimony and interview statements from [REDACTED] who said the Appellant also tried to influence him. During their call the Appellant told [REDACTED] he might

be contacted by investigators and if so to "tell them I wasn't involved, that I didn't do anything and that it wasn't me" (Dept. 12 p 22). Despite the Appellant's contentions to the contrary, there was no real indication that either of them were lying or were somehow conspiring against him.

As to Ford, the Department's argument that he also tried to influence her fell short. Some communications between the two was expected in that at the time of the cited text and phone calls, they were still dating. The investigator's finding that he called and asked if she "had his back" was not an accurate characterization of what Ford actually told them (Dept. 26 p. 54). She appeared to be talking about his fellow officers and not herself when she used the term "you guys" (App. F 13). Unlike [redacted] and [redacted] she did not believe the Appellant was attempting to influence what she would say, but was basically just letting her know that some investigators might be calling her. Although [redacted] admitted that she might not have seen everything, it had always been her position, both in her discussions with the instigators and in those communications with the Appellant, that she did not believe he had done anything wrong (App. F p.13). When asked by the investigators as to whether he requested that she tell them she didn't see anything or that he wasn't there, [redacted] did not indicate the Appellant made any such request.

Even though the evidence showed he contacted and discussed the incident with several witnesses, the Appellant argued doing so was appropriate since there was no formal Internal Affairs investigation underway at the time. This rational is misplaced in that the policy also prohibited interference during any investigation that "shall include, but is not limited to, any criminal, civil, or administrative investigation, review, inquiry, inquest, hearing, trial, or similar activity conducted by representatives of this Department." Given what was said during these communications, at a minimum it was clear that the Appellant was aware that some type of inquiry had started. If he actually believed there was none, then there would have been no need

for him to contact these people to try and figure out what happened. He gave the responders the impression that night that he had not been involved. If so, there was no reason for him to call witnesses at a later date. In addition, he already knew much of what had happened, including who had been involved, prior to talking to these individuals. This would be consistent with his representation that he did not learn anything as a reason for not passing along to investigators the content of these calls. More likely than not, these interactions were not an attempt to find out what occurred, but rather to influence what they might say should they be contacted.

5. Section 3-01-040.70 (False Statements) and/or 3-01/040.75 (Failure to Make Statements or Making False Statements during a Departmental internal investigation)

The Department correctly noted the Appellant made several false statements to investigators on or about January 30 through February 1, 2014. As to his "no" response to Rodriquez at the scene, as noted above, that was clearly false. It was a little less clear when he told [redacted] the next day that he just rolled up after "you guys got there" (Dept. 29 p. 13). What was meant by "rolled up" was not certain, even when [redacted] testified about it (*8/16/16 Trans., 15:16-22*). The Appellant clearly did not arrive at the bar at that time, which would seem to be the plain meaning of the quote. Even if the Appellant meant by it that he had not seen or was uninvolved with what happened, that comment and the one he made to Lt. Rush when he denied being involved in the fight, were both untrue. The Appellant knew each of them was a false statement. He was aware to some extent how the fight started and who was involved. Again, he was there from the beginning in that although he denied striking [redacted] he did admit to raising his hands in a defensive posture and talking to him as [redacted] ran up to him just prior to the others assaulting him.

His representations that he did not know what had happened also were inconsistent with what he told ███ that very night. The Appellant told ███ he saw "two friends fighting with this kid – victim, whatever you want to call him" (Dept. 27 p. 4). His counter that these statements by his wife were inaccurate was not persuasive. In relevant part they mirrored those he made to ███ relatively soon after the incident. ███ testified the Appellant also told him that he knew who had been involved. There was no indication ███ or ███ talked to each other about what occurred as an indication they were out to get or somehow conspire against him. As ███ correctly pointed out, a misrepresentation could include both what was actually said and/or facts one knew, but chose to withhold (*August 18, 2016 45:21-24*).

6. Section 3-01-040.70 (False Statements) and/or 3-01/040.75 (Failure to Make Statements or Making False Statements during a Departmental internal investigation) on or about April 9, 2014.

It was also correctly alleged that the Appellant both made several false statements and failed to make others later during his administrative interview. The Department referenced six statements, some of which were supported by the record while others were not. Given the charge used the conjunctions "and/or," there was no need to show the Appellant knew each was false when made to support a violation of these specific policies.

The Appellant was aware that several were untrue including his response of ". . when I walked out the fire engine was pulling in" to the question if he saw anything. He had clearly been involved before the deputies responded. In addition and as noted above, he knew the response he gave twice that "there was no incident," including to the Watch Commander about what had happened was also not true (Dept. 28 p. 2). As to his denial regarding how the fight started, he knew what had occurred in that it was he who first interacted with ███ outside of the bar.

As to those cited quotes in the disciplinary letter regarding his physical location (6 (a) and 6 (b), it did appear as if he moved inside at some point, at least into the doorway, after his own interaction with [redacted] Several witnesses in addition to the Appellant said he moved either to the doorway or further into the bar. As was the case with whether or not he struck [redacted] there were witnesses who gave statements to the contrary. In total, there was not enough factual support to make a finding that he was outside instead of inside during the assault.

Since, as noted above, there may have been no contact between them, when the Appellant said, "I'd say no," when asked whether or not [redacted] had seen him throw several punches, this response likewise was not sufficiently proven to have been false.

G. Appropriateness of the Discipline

The Department was rightly concerned that it could not risk retaining the Appellant and have him repeat such behavior. Given that several of the people at Mabel's knew he was an off-duty deputy, his actions reflected negatively on both the Department and himself. He was aware of the possible ramifications of such behavior having received the "Guidelines for Discipline" when he began with the Department (Dept. Ex. 43). LaBerge noted the only recommended disciplinary action in them for fraternization was discharge.

In addition to the seriousness of the offenses, the Appellant had a previous disciplinary history which included two suspensions for having violated some of these very same policies (Dept. 49). Rather than accept responsibility for his actions, he chose to fault others as somehow trying to conspire against him for personal gain, the latter which he never elaborated on.

In his closing the Appellant cited several mitigating factors he believed Department did not entertain. As to the fact that no criminal charges were filed and that [redacted] may have had a bias or motive in naming the Appellant as the one who assaulted him, they were addressed and

discounted as noted above. There was a fair amount of time that passed between the incident and the investigative interview, but many of the false statements cited were made back on shortly after the incident. As such those statements were not prejudiced by time.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. The Applicant was hired as a Deputy Sheriff on April 19, 2001. He was relieved of duty in February 2014.
2. The Applicant was assessed a two-day suspension regarding safeguarding the property of others in July of 2011. He was also given a twenty-two day suspension in December 2012 associated with a drunk driving incident and a four-day suspension in February 2013 arising out of a foot pursuit.
3. The District Attorney reviewed the assault on [REDACTED] at Mabel's bar, but decided not to prosecute given the allegations could not be proven beyond a reasonable doubt.
4. The Appellant violated Section 3-01/030.5 (General Behavior) and Section 3-01/050.85 (Fraternization and Prohibited Associations) when he had a personal relationship with [REDACTED] who was a convicted felon and one with a notorious reputation.
5. The Appellant admitted to contacting [REDACTED] after he left prison. The contact was within 30 days after his release, which was on August 11, 2014 and as such, violated policy. The Appellant did not know [REDACTED] was on parole at the time.
6. The Appellant accompanied [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] on motorcycle rides and while attending drinking establishments. The Appellant was found to have in his residence a traffic citation for [REDACTED] issued by another officer. Even though [REDACTED] had asked for his assistance, the Appellant did not discuss the matter with the other deputy or take any other action regarding the ticket.

7. The Appellant violated Section 3-01/030.5 (General Behavior) and Section 3-01/050.85 (Fraternization and Prohibited Associations) when he met with "[redacted]" and then a "[redacted]" at the latter's home to retrieve his stolen motorcycle seat without notifying his commander. At the time of the contacts, he knew both individuals were members of the [redacted] which was a motorcycle gang and not a club.
8. The Appellant violated Section 3-01/030.5 (General Behavior), Section 3-01/040.90 (Reporting Information); when he failed in a timely fashion to disclose information regarding his involvement in the assault against [redacted] to a supervisor or the other responding deputies.
9. The Appellant intervened and was "playing police" when he prevented [redacted] and [redacted] from assaulting [redacted] in the bathroom at Schooners. He remained in their company after this incident and went with them later that night to Mabel's where the assault on [redacted] occurred.
10. The Appellant did not strike [redacted] with his fists, but did witness several of the individuals he had been with that evening at two different locations participate in the assault. He did not intervene to stop or prevent them from doing so, and/or report the incident as required.
11. The Appellant violated Section 3-01/040.76 (Obstructing and Investigation/ Influencing a Witness) when on or about January 30, 2014 through February 2, 2014 he actively interfered with an investigation by speaking with and trying to influence [redacted] and [redacted] He was anticipating they might be contacted by the Department about the assault on [redacted] at Mabel's. The Appellant did not interfere with or try to influence

All three individuals were eventually interviewed by the Department regarding the incident.

12. The Appellant violated Section 3-01/040.70 (False Statements), Section 3-01/040.75 (Failure to Make Statements and Making False Statements During Internal Investigations) on or about January 30, 2014 through February 1, 2014 when he failed to make full complete and/or truthful statements regarding the assault on when he: told "Oh it wasn't like that. I just rolled up after the fight and then you guys got there," and/or words to that effect; and/or when he told Deputy "No" when she asked him if he knew what had happened at the incident involving and/or words to that effect; and when he told a Lieutenant he had not been involved in the fight at Mable's.
13. The Appellant violated Section 3-01/040.70 (False Statements); and/or Section 3-01/040.75 (Failure to Make Statements and/or Making False Statements during Internal Investigations) on or about April 9, 2015 when he failed to make full, complete and/or truthful statements during his administrative interview when he stated: "I don't' know," after he was asked how the fight started, and/or words to that effect; when he responded with "there was no incident," when asked if he notified the Santa Clarita Watch Commander, and or words to that effect; and when he stated "Didn't, I, when I walked out, the fire engine was pulling in." after he was asked by a Department representative what he saw that night at Mabel's.
14. The Appellant's discharge was consistent with the Department's disciplinary guidelines.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The allegations contained in the Department's letter of May 13, 2015 were true.

2. The discipline was appropriate.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Appellant's discharge be sustained.

Dated: April 21, 2017

Stephen Biersmith, Esq.



OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

HALL OF JUSTICE



JIM MCDONNELL, SHERIFF

September 18, 2015

Deputy Travis Steen, #

Date of Department Hire 04/19/2001

Dear Deputy Steen:

On May 13, 2015, you were served with a Letter of Intention indicating your right to respond to the Sheriff's Department's pending disciplinary action against you, as reported under File Number IAB 2318310. You were also advised of your right to review the material on which the discipline was based.

You did exercise your right to respond. However, after review and consideration of the response submitted to support your position, it has been determined that the recommended discipline is appropriate.

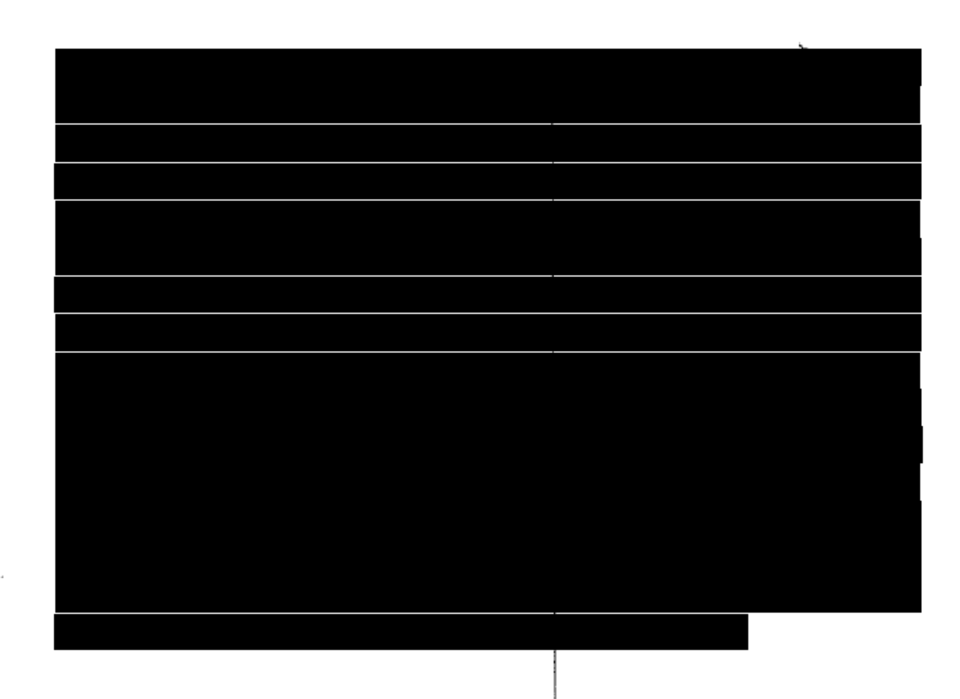
You are hereby notified that you are discharged from your position of Deputy Sheriff, Item No. 2708A, with this Department, effective as of the close of business on August 17, 2015.

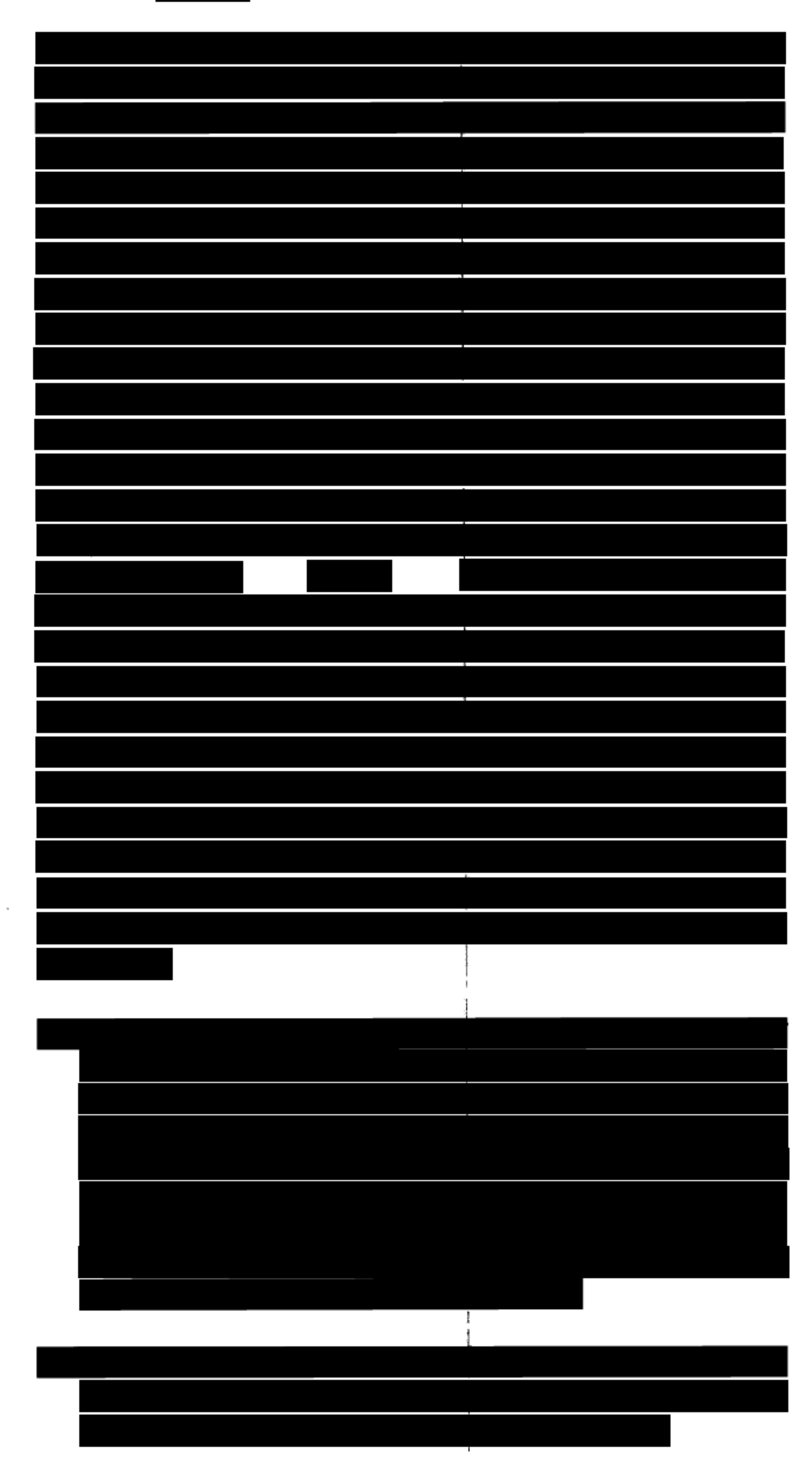
An investigation under File Number IAB 2318310, conducted by Internal Affairs Bureau, coupled with your own statements, has established the following:





Your conduct brought discredit to yourself and/or the Department as patrons and employees of Mabel's and Schooner's bar knew or believed that had a criminal history and/or belonged to a motorcycle gang, and that you were employed with the Sheriff's Department.





5. That in violation of the Department's Manual of Policy and Procedures Section 3-01/040.70, False Statements; and/or 3-01/040.75, Failure to Make Statements and/or Making False Statements during Departmental Internal Investigations, on or about January 30, 2014, through February 1, 2014, you failed to make full, complete and/or truthful statements regarding your involvement in the assault of [redacted] as evidenced by, but not limited to:

   a. stating to Sergeant [redacted], "Oh it wasn't like that. I just rolled up after the fight and then you guys got there," and/or words to that effect; and/or,

   b. stating, "No," when Deputy [redacted] asked you if you knew what had happened at the incident, and/or words to that effect; and/or,

   c. stating to Lieutenant John Rush that you were not involved in the fight at Mabel's Bar on January 30, 2014.

6. That in violation of the Department's Manual of Policy and Procedures Section 3-01/040.70, False Statements; and/or 3-01/040.75, Failure to Make Statements and/or Making False Statements during Departmental Internal Investigations, on or about April 9, 2015, you failed to make full, complete and/or truthful statements during your administrative interview, as evidenced by, but not limited to:

   a. stating, "and then I think, I like, walked in a little bit more back in and then all of a sudden I hear there was a fight," and/or words to that effect; and/or,

   b. stating, "I don't know," when asked, how did the fight start, and/or words to that effect; and/or,

c. stating, "Didn't, I, when I walked out, the fire engine was pulling in," and/or words to that effect when you were asked what did you see; and/or,

d. stating, "No way. I'm safe inside," when asked if you went outside to look at anything, and/or words to that effect; and/or,

e. stating, "I'd say no," when told that said he saw you throw several punches at Mr. , and/or words to that effect; and/or,

f. stating, "There was no incident," when asked if you notified the Santa Clarita Watch Commander, and/or words to that effect.

Additional facts for this decision are set forth in the Disposition Worksheet, Investigative Summary and Investigative Packet which are incorporated herein by reference.

In taking this disciplinary action, your record with this Department has been considered, and a thorough review of this incident has been made by Department executives, including your Unit and Division Commanders.

You may appeal the Department's action in this matter pursuant to Rules 4.02, 4.05 and 18.02 of the Civil Service Rules.

You may, if you so desire, within fifteen (15) business days from the date of service of this notice of discharge, request a hearing on these charges before the Los Angeles County Civil Service Commission, 500 W. Temple Street, Room 522, Los Angeles, California 90012.

The Sheriff's Department reserves the right to amend and/or add to this letter.

Sincerely,

JIM McDONNELL, SHERIFF

JACQUES A. LA BERGE, CHIEF
NORTH PATROL DIVISION

Note: Attached for your convenience are excerpts of the applicable areas of the Manual of Policy and Procedures and Civil Service Rules.

JAL:EMS:DLM:vv

cc: Advocacy Unit
Jacques A. La Berge, Chief, North Patrol Division
Roosevelt Johnson, Captain, Santa Clarita Valley Station
Internal Affairs Bureau
Judy A. Gerhardt, Captain, Personnel Administration